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*Historical notices and records
of the village and parish of Fincham*

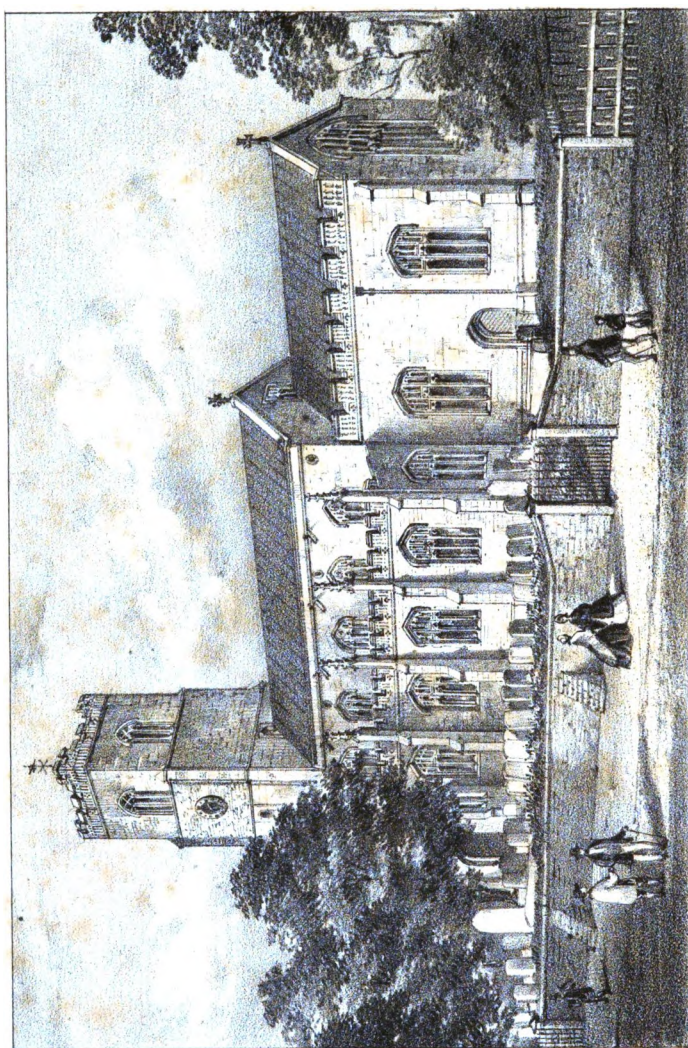
William Blyth

Oct. from Lady. 1892

Nov. 1892

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**ST MARTIN'S CHURCH,
FINCHAM.**

Historical Notices and Records

OF THE VILLAGE AND PARISH OF
FINCHAM, IN THE COUNTY OF NORFOLK.

By the Rev. William Wlyth, M.A.,

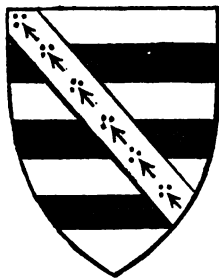
(*Christ College, Cambridge.*)

RECTOR OF FINCHAM ST. MICHAEL'S,
WITH THE VICARAGE OF FINCHAM ST. MARTIN'S ANNEXED;
AND RURAL DEAN.

Trajecto Iside, ("Ousam" dicunt, sed corruptè, ut mihi videtur, pro "Isidem"), in Centuriam Clackclose pervenitur, quæ, cum multis in eadè villis, ad Ramesiense Monasterium olim spectabat, hodie ad amplissimum Equitem Johannem Hare, velut unum illius Abbatæ cohæredum.

Sir Henry Spelman's *Icenia*,

Hundred of *Clackclose*.



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A.D. MDCCCLXIII.



TO
SIR THOMAS HARE, BARONET,
OF STOW BARDOLPH,
IN THE COUNTY OF NORFOLK;
LORD OF SEVERAL ANCIENT MANORS
IN FINCHAM;
AND LORD PARAMOUNT OF THE HUNDRED OF CLACKCLOSE;
THESE HISTORICAL AND LOCAL RECORDS
ARE VERY RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,
BY HIS FAITHFUL AND OBLIGED SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

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. Many of the above names are given for two or more copies, and to all the author returns his sincere thanks for their kind and courteous replies to his circular note.

PREFACE.

The late Bishop of Norwich, Dr. Stanley, published a series of "Heads and Questions," "for the arrangement of local information in every department of parochial and rural interest"; and in his Preface he says: "If a collection could be made of all the insulated and floating facts connected with the various branches of topographical knowledge, it is obvious that an invaluable body of information might be amassed, of the utmost importance to the traveller, the antiquarian, the man of science, and the naturalist." "Society," he continues, "is justified in expecting from each of its members his mite of contribution." Having during my Incumbency in this parish collected at leisure times a very considerable amount of historical and descriptive matter of the character alluded to, the thought of sending it to the press, for the information of others likely to be interested or amused thereby, finds at once encouragement in the words of his Lordship's little pamphlet.

I am assured also, by those competent to judge, that from the materials in hand a volume may be compiled which shall be attractive not only to my parishioners, but to many others who delight in the records of by-gone days. Nay, further, I am not unwilling to admit that I indulge the hope, as becomes a clergyman, that a word spoken in season, as is here designed, or out of season, if the reader shall so judge, may be turned to good account; and, anyhow, that "bread so cast upon the waters" may be "found after many days." Nor do I think that any earnest man, of

PREFACE.

average experience in life, and confiding in his own integrity, ought to be deterred from using the press, in the conscientious promotion of a good object, by the fear of an insinuated presumption in "rushing into print," as the phrase is, as if one were thereby necessarily rushing to perdition. The press, we know, like other great engines, is mighty for both good and evil, and for evil how mighty let the thousands of penny and halfpenny publications in large towns testify. Ought we not, then, as far as we may be able, on every fitting occasion, to enlist this powerful engine on the side of "peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety"? With all due deference, I think that the clergy especially are far too slack in their use of the press, and I for one do earnestly hope that the day is not far off when in many parishes the occasional circulation of a printed address, or even the publication of the parochial and local monthly magazine, will not be an extraordinary and exceptional feature in ministerial work, whether for the grave business of communicating religious instruction, or for supplying lighter and yet wholesome reading in these reading days.¹ And herein I may with confidence assure my clerical brethren, or any lay friend with sufficient time at his disposal, that nothing will be more acceptable to a village community, or more generally popular, than authenticated records of the locality of their birth or residence. They resemble golden treasures which have been long hid in the recesses of the earth, and are even perhaps corroded thereby, but nevertheless they will interest and delight not only the actual finder but every bystander likewise.

Blomefield's *History of Norfolk* forms, in some

¹ The Parish Magazine, by the Rev. J. Erskine Clarke, of Derby, with its *local editor* and *adapted cover*, is a good specimen of what may be done in this way. To make it self-supporting, however, a larger number of subscribers would be required than can usually be found in country villages.

PREFACE.

particulars, the basis of these pages, as might be expected. Justly celebrated, however, as is that work of our county historian, its history of any particular locality is necessarily very brief and scanty; the more particularly so, since he died leaving a very large part of his work to be completed by others from his notes. The Deanery of Fincham, or Hundred of Clackclose, which are co-extensive and coterminous, lie under this disadvantage. And there are, moreover, in this work many inaccuracies of importance in some of the descriptions and family histories; not to mention very numerous typographical errors everywhere. All these have been corrected, as far as possible, by reference to original and new sources of information; and the outline of the local history of the parish is very greatly enlarged.

By the generous permission of Sir Thomas Hare, Baronet, and more especially by the exceedingly kind assistance of the Rev. G. H. Dashwood, Vicar of Stow, I have obtained from the muniment room of the Stow estate some valuable treasure^s, not only specially relating to this parish, and the history of the ancient family of Fincham, but to a certain extent of general interest also. The Fincham pedigrees in their earlier parts have been made out almost entirely by Mr. Dashwood, and all are printed by himself, and, together with one or two other plates, are most liberally presented to me for this work; and I must be permitted to say of them that they have been compiled with no ordinary care and ability, and are beautifully set up. If there be an error or two remaining, they are those of the old MSS. and Visitations themselves.¹

¹ One has sometimes heard objections raised against the study of genealogies, especially in clergymen. In reply, I would only say, not to quote the earlier parts of the Bible, that the New Testament opens with genealogies, and only warns us against those which are "endless." Connected with biography, as they so intimately are, they may be made to subserve the best of "ends," viz., the teaching of continuous example from generation to generation.

PREFACE.

I have been much assisted also by the Rev. George Munford, Vicar of East Winch, in the compilation of the early history of the parish, and especially in its illustration from Domesday Book, an "*Analysis*" of which, as relates to Norfolk, has been published by him.

If either in the text, translations, or notes, my descriptions or explanations shall seem to some to be trivial or unnecessary, I can only say that I have thought it better to err, if it be so, in this direction, than not to be intelligible, as far as possible, to all readers.

It is unfortunate that there are no domestic records of their ancestors existing with any of the present representatives of the Fincham family, that I can discover, if I except a few letters and papers belonging to Mr. Fincham, of Blandford, in the county of Dorset, which he has kindly sent to me. Amongst these is a letter from Mrs. Browne (formerly Mary Fincham, of Diss,) to her cousin Frederick, in London. She writes (August 16th, 1809): "You cannot think how
"pleased I am that I have at last found one of the
"family taking an interest with me in completing our
"pedigree, which I have been labouring at for years;
"but what can a woman do alone? The particulars
"I send you I had from Mr. Forby, of Fincham, the
"present Rector. I dined with him, and he shewed
"me the Church, and the old Hall, where there is
"enough to satisfy the mind of its former grandeur.
"In one little room are the Fincham Arms, exactly
"like those we use, which delighted me and Mr.
"Forby much. The church is a very pretty one, and
"only wants new pewing; it would then be the
"prettiest church in Norfolk, and had I a good fortune
"it should be done. . . . My father had an
"aunt Goddard, whose maiden name was Fincham.
"Her father was a physician. I have often heard her

PREFACE.

“talk of the family being very grand. My uncle Fincham, of Diss, had a book that gave an account of the family for 400 years back, which he gave to my aunt, but I cannot find it, and fear it has been used as waste paper.” I quote this letter both for its generous and happy spirit and as conveying some notion, though pardonably partial, of the position and consequence of the family whose name will so frequently occur in these pages.

For the rest, I can truly say that I am myself surprised at the extent to which this humble attempt at village history has grown, so far beyond my original intentions, the more so since I have studied throughout to avoid both irrelevancies on the one hand and insignificant minutiae on the other; much less would I desire to rake up events which, however calculated to gratify uncultivated tastes, had far better be consigned to the dark chambers of oblivion for ever. I do not profess to write a particular and unbroken history of my parish, if that were even possible to any man, which it is not. There are, however, legitimate and perhaps valuable mines still unexplored, which I must leave to others, if haply at some future time any there shall be, who may feel encouraged by what they find here to supplement my defective essay, and to add another “mite of contribution to that stock of information which,” to repeat the Bishop’s words, “society is justified in expecting from each of its members.” Only let such bear in mind that the pursuit is both laborious and fascinating, and may easily become expensive. It makes serious and tempting demands upon our time; and to succeed, in conjunction with due attention to our other avocations, we must have patience, leisure, opportunity, and the experience of several years; in the meanwhile,

“FUGACES, EHEU, LABUNTUR ANNI.”

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CHAPTER I.

1. FINS-HAM, IN SAXON TIMES.

The formation of parishes in England commenced about the seventh or eighth century, in the times of the Anglo-Saxon kings. The inhabited parts of the country no doubt had their small inclosures and clustered dwellings long before, but it was not until about this time that the whole country was marked out into regularly defined districts. These districts were at first called *Marches*, and many of them took their name from the head or chief of a united band, who had settled down in them for the purpose of cultivating the land. As the Christian religion took root in England, the chief or lord of the soil considered it a duty, and a meritorious act, to build a church for the good of his tenants and people; and having done this, he next endowed it with a portion of tithe lands, or glebe, and appointed thereto a priest or minister, with a defined district, over which he was to exercise his holy functions. This district was then called a *parish*,¹ still retaining in most instances the ancient name by which it had been known; larger divisions were called *hundreds*,² and still larger constituted the *shire*,³ or *county*.

¹ *Parish* is from *parochia*, which is formed from two Greek words signifying *near* and *house*, or a *neighbourhood*.

² *Hundreds*, according to Hallam, were originally districts inhabited by 100 free families, and were formed before parishes. They were divisions known among the Germans, even in the time of the Roman invasion, and were no doubt introduced here by our German ancestors upon their earliest settlement.

³ *Shire* is from the Anglo-Saxon *sciran*, or *schyran*, to *divide*, and this division as to extent was the district or territory of an earl or *count* and thence called *county*.—Rev. G. M.

The manner in which this local name was very frequently derived was by calling the place the *home* of the original first lord, or of some early settler; and very often including the word *ing*, which means *family* or *people*. Thus we have *Ant-ing-ham*, the *hame* or home of the *family* or *people* of *Ant*, or *Anant*; and *Wals-ing-ham*, the home of the descendants of *Walsæs*. And so of many others. But greatly more numerous are the names of places having the word *ham* simply attached to some other Saxon word or name. There are about 167 of these in Norfolk alone. Amongst them is FINCHAM, and the origin of the name may be safely traced to one of two roots, namely, either to *Finc*, which is *Finch*, or else to the still more simple and elementary *Fin*.

Of *Finch* little more can be said than that it is the name of a genus of birds. But *Fin* was unquestionably a Saxon patronymic, or family name, and perhaps not uncommon amongst the various Teutonic races who colonized England in the 5th and 6th centuries. It is found in the Anglo-Saxon chronicle of that time. It occurs in old records of Lincolnshire. And there was also one Fin, a Dane, who held lands in Bucks, before the Conquest. The etymological spelling of the word is *Finn*,¹ and is still preserved and used; a gentleman of this name, for instance, being British Consul at Jerusalem.

Moreover, we read that the Frisians of Friesland, in Northern Germany, established themselves with other tribes in England, and that Fin was their chief. We may trace their progress to this day in the names of certain places in England, such as Friez-land, Frais-thorpe, and Fry-stone, in Yorkshire; Fries-thorpe and Fries-ton, in Lincolnshire; Free-thorpe, in Norfolk; and Fris-

¹ The Saxon *finn* is from the old Latin *pinna*, for *penna*, a feather; hence the *fin* of a fish, and *fan* also, all "light moving shapes"; and even *fun*, "light boisterous merriment."—See Kemble's Pref. to *Beowulf*, vol. ii., p. 24.

ton, in Suffolk; together with Fin-don, Fin-mere, Fin-stock, Fins-bury, Fin-borough, and Finn-ing-ham, which last two are in Suffolk. Now it is both reasonable and natural to class with these our own *Fins-ham*, which would be pronounced *Fin-sham*, or *Fincham*. And in further corroboration I may add that this original spelling of the name is found occasionally in other places; for instance, in 1667, an administration was granted in relation to the effects of Robert *Finsham*.¹ There was also "Thomas *Fynsham*, sometime fellow of King's Hall, Cambridge."² Blomefield's derivation, "a place where low meadows abound," is one of his speculations (or perhaps of his continuator, Mr. Parkin,) of the watery origin³ of the names of about three-fourths of the villages of this hundred, and perhaps of the county.

2. THE FIGHT AT FINNES-HAM, OR FINSBURGH.

Without seeking any further proof of what is advanced in the preceding section, that which follows is introduced as curiously illustrative of it, and likely to amuse the reader. In the celebrated legendary Saxon poem of *Beowulf*,⁴ the Dragon-Slayer, there occurs the story of a fierce feud between certain clans or tribes, of whom on one side *Fin* is the chief, and *Hnæf* with

¹ Probate Court, London. ² Cole's MSS., Br. Mus., vol. lx., p. 141.

³ "The ancients were bad etymologists, and some of the moderns, it is to be feared, do not excel them."—Bl. in Hunstanton, vol. vii. See also the preface to vol. vi.

⁴ "Beowulf" is the oldest poem in any Germanic language. There is only one manuscript of it extant,—viz., that in the British Museum, in very bad condition, having been injured by fire. It was written about the first half of the 11th century. *Thorpe's Edition*, pref. p. xi.

Hengist on the other. The scene has always been supposed to lie in *Friesland*, or at least somewhere on the northern continent of Europe. Hengist and his men are slain by Fin, who in consequence is soon after set upon and slain by the Danes, under Guthlaf and Oslaf. *Finnes-ham* is plundered, and *Hilburgh*, Fin's queen, is carried away to the Dane's land.

But it is not only in *Beowulf* that we have the legend. There exists a fragment of another poem, entitled "The Fight at Finnes-ham," the history of which itself is curious. It was first discovered on the cover of a manuscript of Homilies, in the library of the Archbishop of Canterbury, at Lambeth, but it is not now to be found, having probably perished under the hands of an ignorant workman in re-binding the volume.¹

I quote first a few introductory lines in *Beowulf*, which present to us a picture of the mode in which our forefathers were entertained,—by the recital of the exploits of their ancestral heroes at their feasts. "There was song and sound all together, the lay oft sung, when Hrothgar's minstrel, the joy of the hall, should tell about Fin's sons, when the invasion came upon them."²

The "*Fragment*" introduces Fin, the Frisian King, arousing his followers on seeing a glare of light in his palace, which has been fired by the Danish invaders in an attack by night. "Then the warlike young king cried aloud, This dawns not from the east, neither does a dragon fly here. . . . Now shines the moon, wandering under the welkin. Now deeds of woe arise that this people's enmity will do. But wake up now, my warriors, hold your land, think of valour, march in array, be unanimous. Then many

¹ "The Fight at Finnesham" was first printed by Hickee, in his *Thesaurus*, and afterwards with *Beowulf*.—*Thorpe*.

² Canto xvi., Kemble's Prose Translation.

"a golden decked thane arose and girded on his sword.
 "Then noble champions went to the door. . . .
 "Then was the din of slaughter in the hall. The
 "castle floor resounded until in the fight Garulf,
 "Guthhere's son, fell first of all earth-dwellers. The
 "corpses of many good foes surrounded him. The
 "sword gleam stood, as if all Fin's castle were on fire.¹

For the sequel we must revert to *Beowulf*.

"Hildeburh was bereaved of the guiltless ones, her
 "beloved children and brothers at the war play; they
 "fell in succession, wounded by the spear. That was
 "an afflicted lady. Not in vain did Hoce's daughter
 "(Hildeburh) mourn their death, after morning came,
 "when she might see under heaven the slaughter of
 "her kinsmen. War took away all Fin's thanes, save
 "a few only. . . . Then they pledged a covenant
 "of peace on both sides. . . . Hengest there yet
 "abode with Fin, through the death-hued winter. The
 "sea boiled with storms, wave against the wind. The
 "winter departed, the bosom of the earth was fair.
 "The exile departed, the guest from the dwellings.
 "He thought more of vengeance than of a sea voyage,
 "if he might contrive a hostile meeting. . . .
 "Savage sword-slaughter afterwards overwhelmed Fin
 "at his own home, when Guthlaf and Oslaf—con-
 "sidered their portion of sorrows. Then was the hall
 "surrounded by the hosts of his foes, Fin also slain,
 "the king amongst his troop, and the queen taken.
 "They bare to the ships all the household wealth, of
 "jewels and mounted gems, of the earth king, such as
 "they might find at Finnessham. They bare the noble
 "lady on the sea way to the Danes, led her to their
 "people."²

The immediate purpose of these quotations will now appear. A work has recently been published,³ in which

¹ Thorpe's Edition, ii., 24, &c.

² *Beowulf*, fol. 154-5, cantos xvi., xvii.

³ *The Anglo-Saxon Sagas*, an examination of their value, &c., by Daniel W. Haigh. London: J. R. Smith. 1861.

these poems have been examined, "in regard to their "value as aids to history," and the author has propounded an entirely new theory upon them. "I "believe," he says, "that all the events here recorded " (not including, of course, the giant and dragon "stories), with the exception of two, occurred in this "island, and most of them in Northumbria, during the "fifth and sixth centuries." And as to the *Fragment*, &c., "the Finnesham of the poem appears to be the "place which still bears the name in Norfolk; in the "neighbourhood of which (about nine miles distant) "the name of Fin's queen, *Hildeburh*, occurs at *Hill-borough*; that of her father, Hoce, at *Hockwold*, and "at *Hockham*; and that of Guthhere, one of the "heroes of this expedition, at *Gooder-stone*."

I cannot even glance here at the arguments by which this theory is upheld. They are undoubtedly ingenious, and whatever may be the value of the author's judgment in putting such honor upon our place and neighbourhood, the coincidences are at least remarkable, and the reference far too good to be uninteresting to the present generation of the people of Fins-ham!

3. PHINCHAM, IN DOMES-DAY BOOK, AND THE 11TH CENTURY.

The only source of information in any thing like detail relating to parochial history, at so early a period as the Conquest, is the celebrated *Domes-day Book*.¹

¹ Domesday Book is a record of the lands of England, begun A.D. 1080, and completed in 1086, by order of William the Conqueror. The original is a manuscript of two volumes, a folio and a quarto, now kept in the new Record Office. It was printed in 1783 for general use by command of George III. For further information see Mr. Munford's *Analysis of Domes-day*, &c.

But even from this we can gather but very little as to the general state and condition of any parish. Of its agriculture we can only judge by the very imperfect descriptions we have of the rural economy of England at that time, in connection with the scanty particulars that are here recorded. The Saxons certainly, though a race more addicted to war and rapine, had attained to some skill in husbandry. They succeeded in keeping considerable portions of land under cultivation, and reclaimed large spaces for the pasturage of their flocks and herds.

The arrangement of the Domes-day Survey is according to the *Hundreds*. Fincham is in *Clackclose*.¹ This district is divided by the river Ouse, not in halves, but into a *Hundred and Half*; which was its original designation. This is involved in the quotation from Spelman, in the title page of this book. "Crossing 'the Isis, or Ouse, [from the Half Hundred,] we enter 'the Hundréd of Clackclose.'" This Hundred now comprehends both parts, and extends to Upwell and Outwell. The lordship of Clackclose was given by the Saxon King Edgar to the Abbey of Ramsey, in Huntingdonshire, and at the Conquest was valued at 70s. per annum. Its great privileges were confirmed by Henry I. and John. In the 3rd Edward I. it was valued to the Abbey at 11 marks, or £6 13s. 4d.; and the Abbot had the taking out and return of all writs, &c., view of frank pledge, forfeitures, felons' goods, the lete, a gallows and a prison connected with it. The Hundred Court was held at *Clackclose Hill*, in Stradsett, where also was the gallows, and the prison at Wimbotsham. The Abbot had also a Coroner for the Hundred. On the dissolution of religious houses this

¹ Clackclose, written anciently Clacheslosa, Clakeslosa, &c., may be derived from the Anglo-Saxon *Clacleas*, *free*, and *locen*, an *inclosure* or boundary, from some immunity or privilege with which it was endowed. Rev. G. M.—Blomefield derives it from the Norman, which is clearly wrong it being so called before the Conquest.

lordship came to the Crown, and having been granted to Lord North, was afterwards purchased by Sir Nicholas Hare, Baronet, and is now with Sir Thomas. Some of its peculiar jurisdiction still remains,—as for instance, the Coronership for the Hundred. See Bl., vii., p. 268.

As regards *Phincham* (so spelt in this ancient record) we learn that there were about 734 acres under the plough here in the time of Edward the Confessor, and about 109 acres of meadow land. This would be about one third of the acreage of the parish. This land was tilled by 71 *free men* and two *free women*, one of whom was named *Ailid*, or *Alid*, and was a lady of considerable consequence, holding lands in other neighbouring Hundreds, of all which she was deprived by the Norman invaders. To assist in cultivating these lands there were 49 *bordarers*, a superior kind of labourer, permitted to hold a cottage and a small plot of land or garden, for his own benefit. There were also 23 *servi* and three *villani*, whose relative position and condition it is difficult exactly to define.¹

Then there were 18 head of cattle, 10 horses, 500 sheep and 65 swine. All the ancient freeholders were either entirely driven out of the village, or reduced to the condition of labourers, by the Norman invaders. Their husbandry was most probably of a better kind, but not much improvement is shewn by the Survey after 20 years' occupation by them.

The distribution of the lands of the parish, as gathered from the Record, will appear from the following summaries, in which the manors and possessions of each tenant-in-chief are consecutively described. The extracts, with a translation subjoined, are arranged in parallel columns, and a few explanatory notes added. These are taken chiefly from the "*Introduction to Domes-day Book*," by Sir Henry Ellis; and the

¹ Cowell says that the *villani* were "conveyed as a pertinence of the manor or estate to which they belonged."—*Law Dict.* in voce *servus*.

“*Analysis*” of the same, for the County of Norfolk, before mentioned.

To assist in understanding these extracts it must be borne in mind that three periods of time are embraced by them, namely :

- (1) tc, tunc, t.r.e.=*then, the time of King Edward, (the Confessor).*
- (2) p, post, postquam=*after that time.*
- (3) mo, modo, nunc, t.r.w.=*now, in King William's time.*

Also may be noted sem, sep, semper, as embracing them *all*.

I. WILLIAM DE WARREN, Earl Warren, Count de Guarrenne in Normandy, one of the king's most powerful adherents, having married his daughter Gundreda, received the largest share of lands here. He had about 375 acres, on which he placed two of his dependents, — viz., “*Hugh*” and “*William Brant*,” — as sub-tenants. This nobleman had 139 lordships from the king in this county, valued at £329 4s. 0d. He built a magnificent castle at Acre, thence called Castle-Acre, and died A.D. 1089. The following is the record of his lands :—

NORDFOLC. Vol. ii., fol. 159b.

Terræ WILLIELMI DE WARRENNÆ. HUNDRET DE CLACHESLOSA.

In Phincham tenuit lib ho
ad socham abbis de rame-
seia ii car¹ træ t. r. e. mo
tenet hugo. tc xxiv libi
hœs et modo vi bord et
iv serv et x ac pti. Semp

In Fincham, a free man held (in the time of King Edward), within the soke or jurisdiction of the Abbot of Ramsey, two carucates of land : they are now held by Hugh, (under the Earl). Then also there were 24 free men holding lands here, and now there are six bordarers and four servants upon them ; also ten acres of meadow. Always two

¹ Carucata—a measure of land of 80 acres and upwards, varying in different localities ; as much as a team could plow in a year.

ii car in dnio¹. Tc dim
car hom mo i. Semp val
lx sol.

In eadem villa semp viii
lib hoes q tenet W et xi
bord² et v serv³ semp ii
car in dominio et dim car
hom. xvi acr pti.

Quando recepit cc ovs
xx minus et modo c. Semp
vi an⁴ xxiv porc et iv runc.
Tunc val xl sol p et modo
lx.

In eadem villâ ten Wil-
lm brant ii car terræ⁵ quas
tenuit i libera femina t. r.
e. Semp ii libi hoes et iv
bord iv serv et xvi ac pti.⁶
Semp ii car in dnio et xx
ovs et iii porc et val xxx
sol. In ead vill xii ac et
val xiid.

Totum hoc manerium
Phincham ht i leuga⁷ in
longo et dim in lato, qui-
cunq ibi teneat. qu hund
reddit xx sol de gelto⁸ et
hæc villa xvid.

carucates in demesne. Then half a
carucate held by the tenants, now one.
Their value has always been 60 shil-
lings.

In the same village there had been
eight free men whose tenures the Earl
Warren now holds, with 11 bordarers
and five servants. There have been
always two carucates in demesne, and
half a carucate among the tenants, with
16 acres of meadow.

When he took possession there were
180 sheep, and now 100. Always six
cattle, 24 swine and four cart horses.
The value then was 40 shillings, after-
wards and now 60.

In the said village William Brant
holds (of the Earl) two carucates of
land, which a certain free woman held
in King Edward's time, with two free
men, and four bordarers, four servants,
and 16 acres of meadow. Always two
carucates in demesne and 20 sheep and
three swine; all valued at 30 shillings.
In the same town are 12 other acres
valued at 12 pence.

This whole manor in Fincham is one
leuca long and half a leuca broad who-
ever may hold it. When the hundred
pays 20 shillings gelt this village pays
16 pence.

¹ In dominio—in domaine, or demesne—in the lord's own holding.

² Bordarii=bordarers, having a bord or cottage.

³ Servi=inferior agricultural labourers.

⁴ An.=animalia, oxen or cows.

⁵ Terra, always means *arable* land in D.B.

⁶ Prati=meadow, or pasture land.

⁷ Leuga=league, about a mile and a half.

⁸ Gelt=land tax, payable to the king.

II. The next largest portion of the soil fell to HERMERUS DE FERRARIIS, a powerful Norman baron, whose heirs or successors were the Lords Bardolf of Wirmegay, where they had their castle and resided, traces of which still remain. He had 22 manors in Norfolk, valued at £67 0s. 8d. Here he possessed about 180 acres, and at the survey we find that his live stock had diminished. He was a man of violent nature, and *invaded*, or seized upon many other lands, besides those granted to him by the king, to the extent in value of £20 19s. 9d.

Terræ HERMERI DE FERRARIIS, fol. 205b.

In Phincham iii vill¹ xv bord vii serv et iii car in dominio. xiii ac pti. Tunc iv runci modo i. Tc xii an modo ix. Tc xxx porc modo xxvi. Tc cclx ovs mo clxxv. quarta pars ecclia. semp val viii lib. huic manerio adjacet dim lg silve et i qr in longo et i qr² in lato.

In Fincham Hermer possessed three villeins, 15 bordarers, seven servants, upon three carucates in demesne, with 13 acres of meadow. There were formerly four cart horses, now only one. Formerly 12 head of cattle, now but nine. Then there were 30 swine, now 26. Then 260 sheep, now 175. The fourth part of the tithes of a church. The whole manor is valued at eight pounds. To this manor there belongs half a league of wood, one furlong in length and one in breadth.

Invasio³ HERMERI DE FERRARIIS, fol. 273b.

In Phincham xx libi hoēs tenentes t. r. e. ii car trā, sed tamen viii ex ill

Hermer also seized on in Fincham two carucates of land which 20 free men held in King Edward's time, but eight of them were customaries to the fold of

¹ Villani=villeins, bond slaves, bought and sold with the land.

² Quarentena=furlong, the eighth of a mile and twelfth of a leuga.

³ Invasion, or seizure, without right or title from the king.

erant consuetudinarii¹ ad
faldam antecessoris² sui,
alii erant libi pt comdo-
nem.³ In tra eorum st semp
ii car x ac pti, tc val xl sol
mo lviii et iv d. In ead vil
xvi ac tre val xvi d.

the lord, the other 12 were free, except what they paid for protection.

These lands of theirs have always been two carucates, with 10 acres of meadow. Their value formerly was 40 shillings, now 58 and four pence. In the same town he has seized on 16 other acres of land, valued at 16 pence.

III. A third great lord who obtained land here was RALF LORD BAINARD. He was lord of Castle Bainard in Thames street, London. He held 52 manors in Norfolk, valued at £172 16s. 1d. Here he possessed about 100 acres, besides some other portions he had seized on in this and the adjoining hundreds, to the value of £6.

Terre RADULPHI BANIARDI, fol. 250b.

In Phincham tenuit Alid
liba fem i car tre. Sep iv
bord. Tc iii serv. Sep i car
xii ac pti. Quando recepit
ii r modo i. Tc viii porc
tc xl ovs modo xviii. Tc
val l sol p lx mo xl, hanc
tram calumpniat sca Adel-
dret et hund testatur.

Alid, a free woman, held in Fincham one carcate of land (which Bainard now holds). There have been always four bordarers and three servants upon this carcate and 12 acres of meadow. When he entered on it there were two cart horses, now but one; then there were eight swine and 40 sheep, now only 18 sheep. It was then valued at 50 shillings, afterwards at 60, now only 40. St. Audrey (the Abbey of Ely) claims this land, as the hundred testifieth.

Invasio BAINARDI, fol. 275.

In Phincham invasit
baignard i car træ qu tener
vi libi hoes et dim⁴ t. r. e.

In Fincham Bainard seized one carcate of land, which in King Edward's time six free men and one whose protection was divided held; it is now held

¹ Consuetudinarii, still paid *custom* to the lord by sending their sheep to his fold for the benefit of the land,—the privilege of *fald-sockne*.

² Antecessor commonly means predecessor, but here merely the lord generally.

³ Præter commendationem—except their protection payment.

⁴ Dimidium=half a service, a man under the protection of two lords.

mo vii et dim. Sep ii bord
et i car viii ac pti. Tc val
xx sol mo xl. hanc tram
reclamant sui hoes pro
escangio sed non habt
libatonem.¹

by seven and one, &c. Always two
bordarers on this carucate and eight
acres of meadow. The value then was
20 shillings, now 40. His own men
claim this by right of exchange, but
they have no livery of it to shew.

IV. Terre RAINALDI filii IVONIS, fol. 230 and 276.

In Phincham ten i lib
hom t. e. r. xvi ac træ et
i ac pti. Semp ii b et val
ii sol. Hanc tram invasit
Wihenoc.

Herluinus homo Ivonis
invasit in Phincham i lib
ho de xv ac et val xvi d.
et i ac et dim q Mainardus
invasit et val ix den.

Rainald son of Ivo has 16 acres of
land and one acre of meadow, which a
free man held in Fincham in King
Edward's time. Always two bordarers
and two shillings in value. Wihenoc
held this land obtained by invasion.

Herluinus, a dependent of Ivo, holds
in Fincham 16 acres, of which a free
man had been deprived, valued at 16
pence. And there is one acre and a half
which Mainard similarly holds, valued
at nine pence.

This Rainald Fitz Ivo had 58 lordships in Norfolk,
whose value, together with what he had unlawfully
possessed himself of, was £122 9s. 3d. His manor
passed to the Earls of Clare, the possessors of the
ancient priory of Saint Wynwaloe, in Wereham, now
called Winnold House.

V. Terra Sancte ADELDRERE, fol. 212b.

In Phincham ten S. A.
t. r. e. xxx ac træ. Sep iii
bor et i car x ac pti. val x
sol.

Saint Adeldred (St. Audrey) pos-
sessed in Fincham in King Edward's
time, and still does so, 30 acres of land.
Always three bordarers on this carucate,
and ten acres of meadow with it. The
value is ten shillings.

By St. Audrey is here meant the Abbey of Ely, of
which she was the foundress in 673. The greater
part of the possessions of the abbey were continued to

¹ Liberationem=no release, nothing to shew for it.

it by King William, and in his time its lordships in this county were valued at £116 5s. 6d.

VI. Terra Abbatis de Sancto EADMUNDO, fol. 209.

In Phincham xvi ac træ
et iv ac pti et val ii sol et
viii d.

The Abbot of St. Edmund's (Bury) has in Fincham 16 acres of land and four acres of meadow, and they are valued at two shillings and eight pence.

This Abbey was founded by King Canute, A.D. 1020, on the site of one still older, and was very rich when William came into England. It possessed 53 manors in Norfolk, which were valued at £96 16s. 5d.

CHAPTER II.

1. FYNCHAM, IN THE 12TH AND 13TH CENTURIES.

In the course of time the Normans settled themselves firmly in their new possessions. Their original grants were further subdivided by sale and inheritance. Manor houses of imposing appearance were erected, and a variety of tenures, common rights, &c., sprang up, as the titles of the several lordships became established and recognized. Already by the time of Henry III. there were thirteen defined and distinct lordships in Fyncham. Little more than the names of these can now be traced, and what is known of the history of one or two of them, bare and scanty as it is, represents in many points that of the others.

1. FYNCHAM HALL was a very considerable manor, which gave name and residence to the family who for about 500 years occupied the chief position in the village. *Nigellus de Fyncham*, in the reign of William II., was lord, and gave the tithe of his demesne to Castleacre Priory.¹ The history of Nigellus will be investigated when we come to speak of the origin and pedigree of the Fincham family. This manor continued with them, as already intimated, through a long succession of many generations, until William Fincham conveyed it A.D. 1572 to Charles Cornwallis, Esq., afterwards Sir Charles, who had married his sister Ann. Cornwallis conveyed it to Thomas Gawsell, Esq., in the 28th of Elizabeth, 1586; and from him it came to

¹ Harl. M.S. 2110, part 2, fol. 79, 79b. Br. Mus.

Francis Gawdy,¹ a judge, in the 32nd of the said Queen, and of whom further in the note below. From Gawdy it went, by the marriage of his grand-daughter, to the Earl of Warwick; thence in 1620 to Sir Thomas Cheek and the Lady Essex his wife; and thence to Sir Ralph Hare, of Stow Bardolf, Baronet, in whose family it continues. This manor has received in its passage to its present possessor, Sir Thomas, numerous additions, by purchase or otherwise, until no less than 12 out of 13 original manors in Fincham have become amalgamated in one estate.

2. TALBOT'S HALL was also a considerable manor, and took its name from the family of Talbot, who held it of the Earl Warren. To them belonged originally the patronage of the Church of St. Michael in Fincham. Talbot gave it to the Priory of Castle Acre. His deed is *sans date*, witnessed by John, Bishop of Norwich, and others. Sir Samson Talbot confirmed this grant, anno circa 1246. This manor in the 7th of Edward VI. came to Thomas Drury, but most of the demesne lands were separated from it before this. Soon after it came to the Finchams, and thence to Sir Ralf Hare, Baronet, as in Fincham Hall.² The manor house of Talbot's Hall remains, and is now possessed by Mr. Aylmer, but with only a reputed manorial title.

3. LITTLEWELL HALL was also a manor held of the Earls Warren, by William de Littlewell, before the

¹ Francis Gawdy became Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, August 25, 1605. He was Lord of the Manor of Wallington and Thorpland, and is thus mentioned for his sacrilegious avarice by Sir Henry Spelman: "Dying suddenly in London, he was brought down to be buried at Wallington; but having made his appropriate church a hay house or a dog kennel, his dead corpse for many days could find no place of burial, but growing very offensive was at last conveyed to the church of South Runcton, and there buried without any ceremony; and no stone or memorial was there ever for him." *Hist. of Sacrilege*, p. 251. The Register of Runcton, however, has this: "An. 1605. My lorde Gawdy was buried the 27 day of Februarie, in ye chancell, by Humfry Melton, parson of Runcton holme." Note. The year (1605) not terminating until March 25, reconciles the above dates.

² So Blomefield, *Hist. of Norf.*, vol. iii.

reign of Henry III. The site of it was on the left hand of the road towards Downham. It passed through many hands, until in 1489 it came, with a right of fishery in Little-port, &c., &c., to the family of Fincham, and thence, being united with their other manors, to Sir Ralf Hare, Bart., as before.

4. **COOMB'S Manor.** Richard de la Combe was Lord in the beginning of the reign of Henry III. It was held also of the Earls Warren. In the 16th Henry VI, John Stourton and others were pardoned for purchasing this manor without license of the Dean of Wells. The Bexwells were afterwards Lords, and Francis Bexwell sold it to Charles Cornwallis, from whom it eventually came, through the Finchams, to Sir Ralf Hare.

5. **BENEFELD'S Manor.** John de Benefeld was Lord in the reign of Henry III, under the Earl Warren. In the reign of Edward II, it was valued at £9 2s. 4½d. per annum. It came ultimately to the Finchams, and so to the Hare family.

6. **NEWLAND'S Manor.** In the reign of Henry III, Ralf Newland was Lord, holding of the Earl Warren a messuage and six acres of land. In the 6th Henry IV, John de Fincham was possessed of it, from which family it came with the rest to the Hares.

7. **NEW HALL, or NELE'S HALL, Manor.** John, son of John of New Hall, was Lord in the 7th Edward II; and in 33rd Henry VIII, John Fincham died possessed of it. William Fincham sold it in 1570; and being united to the others it went with them also to the Hares.

8. **BURNHAM HALL.** Philip de Burnham held a lordship here under the Earl Warren. He and Emma his wife, and William his son and heir, gave to the monks of Castle-acre his mill in this town, with the site thereof, &c. Afterwards it came to the Grandcourts. But in the 25th Edward III, John de Fincham was Lord, and from that family it came to the Hares.

Each of the above manors, it seems, derived its origin from the estates of the Earl Warren, but there are neither traces nor traditions of the respective localities of any one of the last five.

9. **FAIR'S-WELL** Manor was part of the Barony of Wormegay, founded by Hermerus. The Lords Bardolf were tenants-in-chief. It was in the Trusbutt family in the reign of Richard II. From them it passed to the Guybons of Thursford, in Norfolk, one of whom sold it about 1720 to Richard Warner, Esquire, of Elmham. It is now the property of Mr. Calthrop, of London. Its site was on the road leading to Stoke Ferry.

10. **CURPLE'S** Manor was also held of the Lords Bardolf, by the Curples, in the reign of Henry III. They were connected by marriage with the Talbots, one of whom married Robert de Cawston, whose daughter Alice married John de Fincham, who by her became possessed of this manor. It is now united with the other manors of Sir Thomas Hare. The manor house was near the rectory, on the west.

11. **GRANDCOURT** Manor was so called from Roger Grandcourt, who possessed it in the time of Henry III. It was held of William de Calthorp and Cecilia his wife, who inherited it from the Bardolfs of Wormegay. In the 3rd Henry IV, it was possessed by John de Fincham, and was sold by William Fincham in 1570, and so passed with Fincham Hall to its present possessor.

12. **BROTHER'S HALL** was held by Simon de Brothers-Hall, in the 24th Henry III, probably of the Lords Bardolf of Wormegay, though the tenure does not appear from any known evidences. Its history is very similar to that of Talbot's, with which it stands connected in the Inclosure Act of 1772.

The following note, from the Court Rolls at Stow, applies to this and seven or eight other of these manors,

and is dated anno 1606: "These manors are so confusedly mixed together, that the demesnes and tenements are hardly to be distinguished the one from the other." An additional cloud of 250 years has completed their obscurity.

13. BAINARD'S HALL, the last to be mentioned, derived its origin from Ralf Lord Bainard, who had a grant here from the Conqueror. It was situated opposite the present rectory. It was lost to the family by his grandson William Bainard taking part with the Earl of Mayne in France against Henry I, and was held by the Fitz-walter family in the time of Edward III, and was then valued at £6 13s. 4d. From them it came to the Finchams, and was conveyed by William Fincham to his brother-in-law Cornwallis, and so went with Fincham Hall.

Not only is the name and site of Bainard's Hall familiar to the inhabitants of Fincham, but *Banyard*, from the Norman *Baignard*, is now a common surname here and in the neighbourhood.

PLAYTER'S HALL, the residence of Mr. Hebgin, was most probably the site of one of the foregoing ancient manors, perhaps Grandcourt's or Brother's Hall. It takes its present name from an owner early in the 17th century, as appears from an old Field Book of 1635: "Capital messuage nuper Edmundi Playter, Gent."

2. FINCHAM, FROM THE 14TH CENTURY.

There are extant at Stow some ancient private terriers and surveys, which, together with more recent maps, &c., afford interesting evidence of the progressive development and improvement of the parish. These I shall notice in chronological order:

1320. There are terriers of the lands of Adam de Fincham, in the early part of the 14th century, written in Latin legal phraseology, and scarcely legible. But they seem to be merely either registers of purchase, or bare descriptions of abuttals, and consequently possessing but little interest.
1460. The earliest local terrier that I have really examined is an old roll in Latin, 22 feet in length, written about the end of the reign of Henry VI. It is a record of the lands of John Fincham, of Fincham Hall, taken out of 103 ancient agricultural divisions, called *Quarantenas*,¹ or furlongs, each containing some 30 or 40 small pieces, from half a rood to three acres. All over these furlongs lie the lands of the said Lord, amounting to about 400 pieces. Having with no little difficulty got through these 22 feet on one side, the reader is thus directed to about half as many more on the other, "respice
"plus in tergo de residuo istius Terrarii." From this terrier we may infer that the quantity of land now under cultivation was considerably more than double what it was at the Conquest, viz., about 1850 acres, including pasture.
1575. In the 17th of Elizabeth, June 14th, a perambulation and survey of the parish was made, and the results are very carefully entered in a *Field Book* (in Latin), and verified on oath by 13 resident tenants of Charles Cornwallis, Esq., then Lord of Fincham Hall. They divided the parish into four quarters, or *precincts*, formed

¹ Although *Quarantena* means *forty*, the number of acres signified by this measure in these surveys cannot be more than 15 or 20, according to the known total acreage. So a ship's *quarantine* may vary from five days to forty.

1575. by the intersection of the two principal roads of the village, the one called "East-gate" passing through the main street to Swaffham, the other the "Walsingham Way" towards Marham. These four divisions contained 135 Quarantenas, an increase of 32 upon the total mentioned in the last terrier. The commons, however, are not noticed in this survey. There must have been now about 2000 acres of land under cultivation.

In Quar. 49, of this survey, containing nearly all the houses and tenements on the south side of the village, occur amongst others the following :—

d. "Waste ground called *chapel hille*, late *All Saints*."

This lies opposite the church, and is now called *the hill*, and was the site of one of those numerous *Free Chapels*, which were dissolved by Edward VI. They were so called because they were built upon ancient crown lands, and were independent of the parish church, and exempt from all ecclesiastical jurisdiction. There were nearly 3000 of them in England.¹

e. "William Bacon holds on the west a house called *the guilde house*."

There were 900 of these guilds in Norfolk, but this one is not included in Mr. Taylor's list. It was dedicated to St. John, as appears from the Subsidy Rolls in the Record Office. It was valued at 40 shillings in 1525. A guild was a society formed for the cause of trade, charity, and religion,—a body corporate licensed by the crown,—and had power to purchase lands, build chapels, and make public processions.

¹ See Taylor's *Index Monasticus* for Norfolk, p. xvi.

1575. Their charities were extensive, and in some respects they resembled modern benefit societies. Almost every parish contained one, having its patron saint, its chapel, and its guild hall.¹

f. "Chirche-Lane towards All-Stoke brigge."

This is now called *Swan Lane*, and is continued by a footpath to the ancient Priory of St. Wynwaloe, or Wynhold, situated in Wereham, on the borders of this parish. Wynwaloe was a British saint, and flourished about A.D. 550. His body was enshrined in a French monastery, to which this priory was a cell; and hence the term *alien*, as applied to monasteries. His anniversary occurs on the third of March, and this being a season often of cold and stormy weather originated the following old rhyme, so frequently quoted in this county :

"First comes David, next comes Chad,
"And then comes Winnold, as if he were mad."

1636. In the 11th of Charles I, another more complete survey was made, with Field Book, written in English, a very neat and valuable MS. It divides the parish into 106 portions, viz.:— 92 Quarantenas in the open fields, and 14 groups of old Inclosures; and mentions six separate Commons, or Common Pastures, containing 713 acres. Every piece of land in the parish is here mentioned, together with all the tenements, but no totals, except the Commons as above. There do not appear to have been any further inclosures made, or any increase of arable land, since the last survey. A map corresponding with the Field Book shews two churches at this time.

¹ See Taylor's *Index Monasticus* for Norfolk, p. xvi, and 71.

1772. The next survey of the parish was made in the 12th of George III, at the time of the Inclosure, by special Act of Parliament. The Commissioners' Award bears date Oct. 6th, 1773, and is preserved in the iron chest at the Rectory.¹ By this inclosure immense benefits were derived to the parish. Its rental was soon doubled. As stated in the Act, there were 2450 acres in the common fields and open lands, mostly arable, and separated into no less than 1560 pieces. These, of course, had all of them their balks and boundaries, which were waste. They lay in four great divisions called *fields*, viz., the *North*, *Lang-holme* or *Sand-pit*, *East Row* or *Wroe*,² and *South* field respectively. Besides which there were other 202 old inclosures about the village. These 1762 pieces of land were reduced in number to about 380, and at the present time are still fewer. Hence we see at once the value of an inclosure. A great number of wastes and driftways are brought under cultivation, not to mention the very obvious advantage of farming lands in close proximity to each other.

But further, all these open fields were subject to various rights of sheep-walk, shackle, &c., in the several lords of manors, and their tenants; and other large portions were *Common*, on which the inhabitants generally had certain rights and privileges. These latter were called the Great Common or West Heath and Besnell, Hungate³ Common, Cow Pasture, Mere Common, and Broadwater.

¹ There exists also a large old map, 7ft. by 4ft., of a date previous to the inclosure, and used for its purposes, by drawing the new fence lines across the old ones; but I find no proper Inclosure Map.

² "The Wroe, a grove of wood by Barton Common, East."—Field Book of 1636.—Wro—a corner.—*Hallivell's Dict.*

³ Hungate is the same as Hundred-gate. It supplied a family name. The Parish Register has this: "Christened Peter and William Hungat, sones of Thomas, 1543."

1772. All these rights and privileges were adjusted and settled to the mutual advantage of all parties. To the poor was awarded a farm of 54 acres, to meet their claims, then valued at £36 per annum. An allotment also was set out "as and for public sand, gravel, stone and chalk pits," for the use of all proprietors and their tenants in the parish.

The expenses of the inclosure amounted to £1016 18s., and were paid by the proprietors, who had also to raise the fences.¹

The rights of sheep-walk, fold-course, shack-age, &c., had become serious impediments to the progress of agriculture everywhere, and sources of endless annoyances and litigation. Take an example from the Court Books of the manor of Fairswell: "1578. John Bardans and John Styward were presented for bringing yeir flock into ye field of ffincham called, and there did damnifye as well ye lands of ye lord of ye maner, as of his tenants, where of right yey ought not to be, yefore fined iiii d, and commanded not to doe soe any more." "sub-pœna 6d."

Again, in 1581, "the lord of this maner sold a Borepigge to Henry Jerves, whiche was taken within the liberty of this maner as an estray, and kept a yeare or more." Estrays could not be sold until after proclamation in the church, and the market town adjoining, nor until they had been kept at least a year and a day. They belonged to the lord only by grant from the king.

¹ By the *General Inclosure Act* this enormous expense is very greatly reduced. The average expenses of the proceedings in 2485 cases of inclosure, exchange, &c., up to the end of the year 1860, confirmed and disposed of by the Commissioners, were only £15 18s. 7d., that is, up to the time of their being dealt with by Parliament in a general and annual Act. Of these, 532 were public inclosures, embracing 347,943 acres.—See Commissioners' Report for 1861.

1839. The last and most complete survey of the parish, with large map, was made under the authority of the Tithe Commutation Act, in 1839. The agreement for the commutation of the tithes, and the apportionment of the same, were settled in the following year, and are mentioned elsewhere. According to this survey,

	A.	R.	P.
The whole parish contains ...	2968	3	11
Of which are Arable ...	2105	3	25
„ Pasture ...	695	1	10
„ Wood	70	3	20
„ Gardens ...	43	0	7
„ Roads and wastes	48	2	2
„ Public drain ...	5	0	27
	2968	3	11

CHAPTER III.

PAROCHIAL INCLOSURES.

Of the history, policy and value of parochial inclosures, a few additional observations may be made, having proof and illustration in what has occurred in Fincham. It is often alleged that the rights of the poor have not been sufficiently respected in these agricultural improvements. This is very probably true of those times, some two or three centuries ago, when lords of manors and owners of lands proceeded in a very arbitrary manner to consolidate their estates. The arable land of a village was then known as the *field*, and was subdivided into *lands* by ridges called *balks*. These *lands* belonged to different proprietors; but when "the corne was inned and harvest don," many householders, as well as other tenants, had feeding rights over some of these lands. In the middle of the 16th century the practice began to be adopted of exchanging and enclosing such lands as lay near to each other, including with them the wastes of the manor, generally considered altogether "common" to the whole parish, no compensation being given to poor claimants. The "covetousness of the gentlemen," so called by the Protector Somerset, was the origin of the notorious commotions in this county known by the name of *Kett's Rebellion*. His efforts were especially directed against these inclosures, and although he and his associates proceeded to the most traitorous and wicked extremities, it is to be feared that they had good

reason for complaint, though none for their violent proceedings.

We have to regret that the people of Fincham prominently committed themselves in those memorable disturbances.¹ "In that same year (1549) certain persons at Fincham were anxious to raise the common people by ringing the bells in every town. One of them, Thomas Stylton,² was accused of saying *it were a good dede that the Comynalte shuld ryse here as they did ther* (in Yorkshire). Their wish was that Mr. Fincham, of Fincham, should join them; and if he would not, they would *make a carte wey betweene his hed and his shulders!* And next that *the halydays that were putte down should be restoryed ageyn.*" In allusion to numerous *Saints' Days*, which at the Reformation were expurgated from the calendar, and the restoration of which none but idle people desired.³

But the boldest, perhaps, of the discontented spirits of the day, to judge by his language, was one John Walker, of another parish, who gave the following advice: "Yf three or four goode felowes would ryde in the night with every man a belle, and cry in every towne that they passe through, to Swaffham! to Swaffham! by the morning ther would be ten thousand at the lest; and then one bold felowe to stande forth and say, Syrs, nowe we be here assembyld, let us go to the gentylmen's howses, and as many as will not tirn to us, let us kylle them, yea, evyn ther

¹ See Russell's History of Kett's Rebellion in Norfolk, p. 7.

² I find this name in the Subsidy Rolls of this period, and have quoted it as amongst those who are rated upon their *wages*, which shews the position of the family.

³ A petition to the king (Edward VI.) in Parliament, from very many persons, of a different mind to the people of Fincham in this matter, prayed that these holydays might be made *fewer* in number, especially such as fell in the harvest, inasmuch as "on them many great abominable and execrable vices were used and practised."—Russell's History, &c., p. 8.

"chylthern in the cradylls ; for yt wer a goode thinge
 "yf there were only so many gentylmen in Norff as
 "ther be white bulles."¹

These troubles were not without good fruits. A spirit of reform, and a determination to correct abuses, sprang up ; enquiries were made, and the evils complained of abated. For the last hundred years, and more, Parliamentary sanction has been required for all public inclosures of waste and common lands, after a strict and full enquiry into the rights and claims of all parties concerned.

The great benefits of an inclosure, thus legally effected, must have already appeared in the case of this parish, as regards its agriculture, and increased money value ; and which applies as well to the rights and interests of the poor as of the rich. And when we remember that there are many persons often taking benefit from an unenclosed common, to an extent greatly prejudicial to the rights of the more needy and infirm, the system must be a great boon to these latter, which brings them their portion, whether in money or coal, to their very doors.

The following stanzas, from a quaint and curious poem on the county of Norfolk, by a member of the Gurney family, in the reign of Elizabeth, so well illustrate the evils and inconveniences incident to ancient common rights, whilst also they point attention to the only remedy for the same, that I am thankful for permission to reprint them from the "Record of the House of Gournay," p. 942 :—

13.

The third or more of all our Norfolk groundes
 is Comon feede, to poore as well as Rich,
 which doth the welth of better sortes confounde,
 and causeth poore with idleness to itch,
 while they do trust of comoninge of feede
 to have whereby to work they shall not neede.

¹ It seems strange after this that *Clackclose* does not appear in the list of those 22 Hundreds which sent "Governors," or "Deputies," to Kett's Council at Norwich.

14.

So while ech seeketh greedily to eate
 his part at least, if not a great deal more,
 not having hay nor straw for winter meate,
 his greater stock doth breed his greater sore,
 for winter's want doth cause those beasts to starve,
 which somer's feede could scarce in life preserve.

15.

By this we see that what at first was ment
 for help of poore, through frankness of the lorde,
 not only wants the purposed event,
 but causeth them with him not to accord ;
 for if he seeke surcharging to restreyne,
 they say he shootes but at his private gayne.

16.

But if they might be equally divided,
 according to each tenantes right and rate,
 the quarrels soon should cease and be decided,
 which ells will cause a lasting spence¹ and hate ;
 so should the poore gaine more of severed acre
 than wher he is of thousand but partaker.

As connected with the *Inclosure* of our parish, a few words on its admirable *Drainage*, so important agriculturally, as well as in a sanitary point of view, will fitly follow here. Fincham is about equally bisected by a deep, direct and well-formed channel, called the *Lode*² *Dyke*, which is the straightened course of a natural stream, flowing from Stradsett through Fincham and Barton into the *String*,³ at Oxburgh, and thence into the *Wissey*, at Stoke Ferry. This drain is from three to four feet below the level of the lands through which it passes, and there is a convenient fall into it from every part of the village. To this, most probably, under Providence, we owe the generally healthy condition of the parish. It would be both instructive and

¹ Spence=expense.

² Lode is from the Anglo-Saxon *lædan*, to lead. It signifies amongst miners a metallic vein or course, and then any regular course or channel.—Imp. Dict.

³ The *String* rises at Beecham-Well. A friend has ingeniously suggested that we call our brook the *Twine*.

agreeable to dilate a little upon the great importance of good drainage, especially to the farmer, but information of the best kind on this subject is continually, almost daily, issuing from the press. I am strongly tempted, however, to introduce here, instead of my own opinions, those of a reputed ancestor, a practical agriculturist, and landowner, of the county of Warwick, living in the middle of the 17th century. He appears to have anticipated by 200 years, as others also did, very much that has been said and written, and happily done, in our own times. His name was *Walter Blith*, or *Blyth*, and his book is entitled "*The English Improver, or a New Survey of Husbandry, &c.*" London, 1649. I quote from it, as well for its amusing quaintness, as for the reasons above given. Inter alia, he says, "The third prejudice [to profitable agriculture] is where all men's lands lie intermixed in common Fields or Meadows; the ingenuous are disabled to the improving theirs, because others will not. As the cutting straight such brookes and gutters as are exceeding crooked, which some that would cannot, because of others interests that will not. Abundance of the best lands is hereby lost, and wonderful improvements hindered; the waters raised, the lands flouded, sheep rotted, and cattell spoyled, by this neglect." "Another prejudice is the many water-mills which destroy abundance of gallant land, by pounding up the water to that height that it lieth swelling and soaking and spewing, that it turneth very much land to a Bog, or to mire, or else to Flag and Rush and mare-blab, which otherwise was as gallant land as could be. Many a thousand a year are thus destroyed, some mills not worth above 10 or 12 pound per an: destroying lands worth 20." "A strait water-cut a considerable depth, in a thousand parts of this nation, would be more advantageous than we are aware of; a great means of laying sound

“ much land overcome by bogginess, the water lying
 “ so upon it, that it drowneth or stiflith a great part
 “ of the fruitfulness of it, yea suffocateth and choaketh
 “ others also bordering upon it, no small prejudice to
 “ the Nation in general, and to many Townships in
 “ particular. Why may not one neighbour join with
 “ another where both are gainers? If not, why may
 “ they not be compelled for their own good, and the
 “ Common-wealth’s advantage? A law is wanting
 “ herein,” &c., &c., pp. 42, 43, 44.¹

¹ There was “ a third impression, much augmented,” of this work, and it was entitled “ The English Improver *Improved*, or the Survey of Husbandry *Surveyed*. London, 1652.”—Communicated by the Rev. E. Gillett, vicar of Runham, Norfolk.

CHAPTER IV.

1. STATISTICS, &c., OF FINCHAM.

Of the population of Fincham, as of any other parish, at the time of the Conquest, it is exceedingly difficult to form a correct idea, since the Domes-day survey was not intended to be a record of the population, further than in ascertaining the owners and occupiers of land, for certain political purposes. Scarcely any notice is taken of any other classes. The total population of England there recorded is only 283,242, according to Sir Henry Ellis, when there cannot have been less than three or four millions. It will be interesting to put down the number of persons mentioned in the survey, as resident in this parish; but it will not be safe, by making calculations for persons not employed in agriculture, or for women and children, to draw any conclusions:—

There were	“liberi homines”	70
„	“bordarii”	49
„	“servi”	23
„	“villani”	3
<hr/>			
Total			145
<hr/>			

From early times, extraordinary grants, of the nature of taxes, were made by Parliament to the Crown for various purposes. These were called *Aids* or *Subsidies*,

which are terms in some respects corresponding with the more modern word *Supplies*. They were levied upon lands and goods, and even wages, at a rate according to the necessities of the sovereign. From the *Subsidy Rolls* in the Public Record Office, I select one *exempli gratiâ*, bearing date January 20th, 16th Henry VIII. The rate unaccountably varies from 6d. to 1s. in the pound on the several valuations :—

“ Hundred of CLACKCLOSE.”

“ FYNCHAM.”

	Valor.	Subsidie.
“ John Fyncham, Esquire, in londes	ciiii ¹	iii ¹ vi ¹ viii ¹
“ Thomas Drury, in goodes &c., &c. (42 others)	xxii ¹	xxii ¹
“ Robert Stynton, in wage &c., &c. (22 others)		vi ¹
“ St. John's Gylde	xi ¹	xiii ¹

The whole list contains 44 assessments on lands and goods, and 23 on wages, and some most probably were excused.

Another kind of supply was called *Devotion Money*, being perhaps for religious or charitable purposes, whether particular and local, or more general. This was collected, with the sanction of the Bishop, in the parish church, and forwarded through his Commissary. It was most probably what was afterwards known as the *Church Brief* or *King's Letter* collection, and extended down to our own times.

The returns are in the following form, which is copied as an example :—

“ This Indenture, made 14th March, 35 Henry VIII,

“(1544) John Keith being Commissary of the Deanery
“ of Fincham to the Bishop of Norwich, &c.”

“ CHURCH-WARDENS.”		
“ John Dreury	Fincham, Martini	three shillings sixpens halfe peny.
“ William Peace }	Fincham, Michaelis	too shillings threepens halfe peny.
“ Nicholas Rixx }		

The *Hearth Tax*, or *Hearth Penny*, of Charles II, affords a good idea of the size of a village and its population at that time. The charge was one penny on every hearth or stove beyond the first, those persons having only one being excused. From “A duplicate of all the fire harths and stoves within the county of Norfolk, taken upon view, for the year ending at the feast of St. Michael, 1672, by Rd. Browne, &c.,” it appears that at “*Finsham*” 41 persons, including “Thomas Hare” and “Ladye Guybon,” paid for 121 hearths; and 48 were excused. The number of householders, therefore, was 89, the population about 445.

From the first keeping of *Parochial Registers* in 1538, to the taking of the first census in 1801, the population does not appear to have increased or varied much, the baptisms being on an average about 18 annually. Taking these as being 4 per cent. of the population, the total will be about 450 souls.¹

From 1801, however, there appears to have been a regular and rather rapid increase. This may be accounted for by the facilities afforded in such parishes as this for building cottages on small freeholds, when

¹ The number of births is nearly twice the number of deaths, in a given population; and the latter vary from two to two and a half per cent., according to locality, &c.

in the neighbouring villages the larger landowners were beginning to adopt a contrary course, to save parochial charges. The following table is compiled from Parliamentary population returns, which have been abstracted and copied into the Registers, and shews the progress of this increase :—

Year.	Houses.	Families.	Males.	Females.	Total.
1801	84	104	251	250	501
1811	109	125	297	304	601
1821	141	155	372	336	708
1831	151	154	371	385	756
1841	177	—	389	418	807
1851	183	196	391	457	848
1861	190	195	399	487	886

The average number of deaths for the last ten years is nearly 17 per annum, or two per cent. on the population, and rather higher than in the first ten years of the present century. We should have expected to find the difference in favour of our own times, for obvious reasons, namely, better dwelling houses and medical attendance, and extensive sanitary improvements. The cause lies probably in the fact of many strong and healthy persons having emigrated, and consequently the average of the deaths among the remaining residents would be disadvantageously affected.

2. PARISH ACCOUNTS.

The usual accounts, both of the Church-Wardens and the Overseers, are perfect from an early date; the one from the year 1729, the other from 1730. From the earliest times a *Church Rate* has been customary, and regular accounts of its disbursement are

preserved. The whole parish has been bought and sold again and again for centuries under this liability. The best adjustment of this vexed question would perhaps be a commutation charged upon the land, and payable by the landlord.

From the books of the Overseers I have made out a brief tabular statement of the expenditure for the relief of the poor, at certain intervals during the hundred years preceding 1856. This will be found, I think, important and useful, as it is certainly very striking, and may be relied upon for its perfect accuracy. I would first premise that the total disbursements for the relief of the poor in 1729 were only £21.

Year.	Rateable Value.			Rate disbursed.			Pop.	Average pr head.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
1756	920	0	0	83	10	6	450	0	3	8½
1801	2729	2	0	524	6	8	501	1	0	11
1821	2824	7	0	776	14	8	708	1	1	11¼
1856	4368	10	0	519	15	9	868	0	11	11½

From this it appears, by the second column, that the *Rateable Value* of the parish increased nearly 300 per cent. during the first 50 years of the period taken, and 160 per cent. more during the succeeding similar period, or a total of 460 per cent. in 100 years.

But the increase of *pauperism*, as shewn by the third column, is in a far greater ratio; for in less than 50 years it had risen 627 per cent., and in 20 more 924 per cent, just double the increase in the value of property! We cannot enter into the causes of this great demoralization of the agricultural labourer. The interests of agriculture were only saved, at length, by the passing of the new Poor Law in 1837. The results of its operation in this parish are very remarkable. The expenditure has been reduced back again to that of 1801, whilst the population has increased more than 50 per cent; the cost per head now being little

more than one half of what it was at that time, and for 30 years after. The poor, too, themselves have certainly adopted a higher style of living, both as to food and raiment; with what propriety in some respects is, at the same time, questionable.

In turning over these old books, I met with some rather quaint and curious items of expenditure, particularly from one "bought at the sign of the Bible,¹ "in the High street, Lynn."

Year.		£.	s.	d.
1731.	Paid the dog-whipper ²		05	00
"	Dec. 26, Thos. Copsy for dog-whipping.....		05	00
1732.	Goody Cook for waiting of the poor people		02	06
1734.	Widow Saltier's burial wool, to wind her in		01	00
"	14 hedge hogs, 17 dozen sparrows		05	02
1737.	Marrying and removing Margaret Stimpson, and carrying the bride and bridegroom to Well	6	14	00
1738.	For killing a mad dog		01	00
"	Gave to three poor men that had been slaves		01	06
1739.	Church-Wardens name on the pulpit.....		05	00
1743.	Six badges for the widows		02	00
1744.	Sparrows, 131 doz. and half.....	1	01	11
"	A badge for widow Copsey			04
1745.	Work done at the High and Low Church.....	2	14	00
1759.	To the burial of a poor stranger, over the things he left		07	00
1766.	The dauber's bill (for the church)		12	00
1780.	Hitching Nell Claydon into Workhouse.....		02	06
1786.	Paid Mr. Copland town stock, nien pound nienteen shillings and seven pence, three fair things, at a Vestry, &c.	9	19	7½
1789.	Thomas Harvey a quarter shavin		08	09

¹ The Bible, or the Bible and Crown, was a favourite and very common sign with booksellers.

² This *ecclesiastical officer* is noticed in the chapter which includes "Parish Clerk and Sexton."

CHAPTER V.

FINCHAM ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH.

1. The BENEFICE.

The number of churches in England, at the time of the Conquest, is believed to have been about 4000. Of these only a few more than 1700 are noticed in Domesday Book¹, as it was not an object of the survey to ascertain their number. There are 317 of these in the County of Norfolk. The Deanery of Fincham contained 17, and one of them was at Fincham.² Among the possessions of Hermērus, as before noticed, there was "the fourth part of the tithes of a Church." This was most probably St. Michael's Church. In a very old deed, sans date, circa temp. Hen. II, this church is mentioned. The advowson had been in the family of the Talbots, and William Talbot now gave it to the prior of Castle-Acre, "with all things thereto "belonging, which he or his heirs had therein, or could "give." This grant was confirmed by Sir Samson Talbot in the reign of Henry III, circa 1250.

In the *Domes-day Book of Norwich*, so called, a beautiful folio MS. in Latin, written about 1360, and copied from one much older, containing an account of

¹ *Analysis of Domes-day Book* for Norfolk, pp. 80, 81.

² *Ibid*, p. 100.

all the benefices in the diocese, the revenues of this church are thus stated :—

Decanatus de Fyncham.
Fyncham Sancti Michaelis.
Taxatio Spiritualitatis.¹

The Prior of Castle-Acre is Patron.

The Rector has a house, with xxx acres of land.

The value of the Rectory (besides the Prior's portion) is xvi marks.

The said Prior's portion in the same is v marks.

The Rector's tenths xxi^s iv^d. The Prior's vi^s viii^d.

Synodals² at Easter xii^d. At Michaelmas xii^d.

Procurations³ v^s. Peter's pence⁴ xv^d.

Taxatio Temporalitatis. (Bona.)

The Prior of Castle-Acre	from rent	xi ^s	viii ^d .
The Prioress of Oarhow (Norwich)	lands	v ^s .	
The Prior of Shouldham... ..	lands	i ^s	viii ^d .
The Abbot of Ramsey ⁵	lete	xx ^s .	
The Sexton of St. Edmund's (Bury)	rent	viii ^s .	
The Abbot of Dereham (West)	rent	xv ^s .	
The Prior of Wormegay... ..	lands	v ^s .	

We see here symptoms of the early appropriation of Church revenues to the monasteries, introduced by foreign ecclesiastics in the service of the Pope. The monks were grasping at the incomes of the working

¹ The *spirituals* were such revenue as was connected with spiritual duties and the cure of souls, and consisted almost entirely of tithes, glebe lands, and house. The *temporals* were such lands or other property as may have accrued to the church by gift or purchase, and belonged chiefly to the regular or monastic clergy. The system of appropriations, however, gradually invaded this principle, and destroyed in great measure the distinction.

² *Synodals*, or cathedraticæ, are payments from each church to the Bishop, in token of subjection to his Cathedral Church, &c.

³ *Procurations* are the Archdeacon's fees for visitation, originally in proportion to the value of the benefice, but now little more than nominal.

⁴ *Peter's Pence* was a very old tax, payable by each family to the Pope, on the feast of St. Peter. It was confirmed by Will. I, and other Kings of England, and abrogated by Henry VIII.

⁵ The Abbot had the lete fees, as Lord of the Hundred.

clergy, whilst the duties were to be performed by their nominee, or *vicar*, upon the lowest stipend that would admit of his subsistence. Hence came vicarages, as will appear in St. Martin's Church. Here are seven monasteries taking maintenance out of this church and parish. They are like so many eagles gathered around it; but still St. Michael's was never reduced to a vicarage. Judgment in time overtook them for their covetousness, indolence, and sensuality. They are not maligned in the application of these terms. The monks of West Dereham, for instance, at the Dissolution, almost every one of them confessed themselves guilty of the most shameful immoralities.¹

In the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* of Pope Nicholas, in 1291, the value of St. Michael's Rectory is put down as above, viz. 16 marks, or £10 13s. 4d. In the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, however, of Henry VIII, anno 1535, it is only £7 6s. 8d. How this reduction came can only be explained by supposing some further *appropriations*.

In 1659, as appears from a MS. value of the livings of the diocese at Stow, by one *Gamaliel Townson*, notary public, the value is still £7 6s. 8d., with the following particulars added: "primitiæ² (first fruits) £6 12s. 0d.—decimæ³ (tenths) 14s. 8d.—synodalia 2s.—proc. 22d. Patronus Radulphus Hare. Rector Roger Gunson."

¹ *History of Norfolk*, vol. vii, p. 336.

² *First fruits* are the net profits of every benefice for one year, as valued in the King's books. The Pope first claimed them in the reign of King John. Henry VIII took them to himself as royal revenue. Queen Anne gave them for the augmentation of small livings, hence called *Queen Anne's Bounty*.

³ *Tenths* are the tenth part of the yearly value of a benefice, and are now applied in a similar way. All benefices under the value of £50 per annum were discharged from these payments by the said Queen. The number now remaining liable is 4898.

2. THE PARISH CHURCH of St. Michael stood west of the Rectory House. It was a fine old building of the Norman and Early English style. It had a handsome square tower, embattled with quoins and copings of freestone, and a pinnacle at each corner. On the north side of the chancel was a *Holy Sepulchre*, and opposite to this three *sedilia*, or stone stalls, for the three orders of the ministry, surmounted by richly carved canopies terminating in stone finials. The nave was spacious, covered by a handsome old oak roof.

This church was suffered to fall into decay during the early part of the last century, and in the year 1744 an Act of Parliament was obtained for the consolidation of the Rectory with the Vicarage of St. Martin¹; the church itself, "being so ruinous that it was dangerous to assemble therein for divine worship," was taken down. The tower at least might have been spared, to mark the sacredness of the spot; but within five years it also was given up to destruction, under the hands of a neighbouring bricklayer, who for the stipulated sum of four guineas levelled it with the ground.²

All the old materials, after the fashion of King Henry's time, appear to have been unscrupulously *appropriated* to every kind of common use, as several barns, bridges, cottages, and walls, abundantly testify to this day.

The last service performed in this church, as stated in the Register, was the marriage of the Rev. William Harvey, Rector, to the widow of his predecessor the Rev. Joseph Forby, May 30, 1745. According to a tradition in the village, Mrs. Harvey narrowly escaped with her life as the tower fell, she being among the spectators.

The only stone remaining visibly on the site seems to have been a very old Norman *boss*, probably the

¹ 18 George II, No. 23.

² "1751. Henry Weasenham, for pulling down the steeple, £4 4s."—*Old Vestry Book*.

central stone of the porch roof. The font, an extremely interesting specimen of the early Norman (some say Saxon) style, was transferred to the other church, and will be described hereafter. Some monumental tablets also were similarly respected, and removed thither.

3. RECTORS of St. Michael's.

John de Palgrave, temp. Henry III.

- 1258. Jeffrey de Derham.
- 1293. Reginald de Gressenhall, dean of South Malling, in Kent.
- 1311. Adam de Saxham, presented by the Prior of Castle-Acre.
- 1313. Jeffrey Brian, by the Prior, &c., of Castle-Acre.
- 1317. Stephen de Kettle-burgh, by the Prior, &c.
- 1320. Edmund Gulafre, provost of Castle Culby, Bangor.
- 1330. William de Monte-acuto (Montague), by the Prior, &c.
- 1335. John de Faloniis, on the resignation of Montague.
Richard Marksaunt.
- 1349. William Roche, by the Prior of Castle-Acre.
William de Happeton.
- 1352. Thomas Atte-lathe, also Rector of Runceton Holme.
- 1356. Thomas Buxkin, on the resignation of Atte-lathe.
- 1393. John Sekerstein, by the Prior, &c., of Castle-Acre.
- 1409. Edmund Pevys, of Wiggenhale, by the same.
- 1409. Jefferey Schavere, of Thuxton, exchanged with Pevys.
- 1412. John Wormegeye, of Newton, Rector of Ickworth.
- 1420. William Atte-mylle, or Atte-wood, Rector of Munford.
- 1421. Thomas Marshall, also Rector of Bexwell and Southery.
- 1434. Richard Domys-day, Rector also of Caldecote.
- 1436. John Walpole, by the Prior, &c., of Castle-Acre.
Robert Lety.
- 1454. William Wright, on the death of Lety, &c.
- 1460. William Ray, on the resignation of Wright.
- 1477. John Shawe, on the death of Ray, by the Prior, &c.
- 1485. Nicholas Barker, on the resignation of Shawe.
William Langland, on the death of Barker.

- 1493. Henry Sharpe, on the death of Langland.
- 1502. John Edmunds, prior of Shouldham.
- 1504. Christopher Wynde, on the death of Edmunds. He left money for a new "ruffe" to the Chancel. By the Prior of Castle-Acre.
- 1525. James Coole, on the death of Wynde, &c.
- 1530. Thomas Coltman, on the resignation of Coole. This was the last presentation by the Prior and Convent of Castle-Acre.
- 1539. John Alowe, by Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, to whom the advowson was given by Hen. VIII.
- 1545. Thomas Freke, vicar of St. Martin's, by the Duke of Norfolk.
- 1587. Robert Gunson.
- 1587. Roger Gunson, by Robert Gunson and John Edgeley.
- 1617. John Collin, on the death of Gunson, by Lord Rich.
- 1658. Francis Power. Collin died in 1658. (*Fincham Register.*)
- 1661. Daniel Gardiner, on the death of Power.
- 1682. Daniel Baker, by Sir Thomas Hare, Baronet.
- 1723. Joseph Forby, by Thomas Forby, Gent, "ultimus Rector," dying August 14, 1744. (*See his monument.*)

This Church was then (1744) consolidated with the vicarage of St. Martin.

CHAPTER VI.

FINCHAM ST. MARTIN'S¹ CHURCH.

1. The BENEFICE.

The Norwich manuscript before mentioned (anno circ. 1360) describes the revenues of this church as follows, but with no mention of Temporals :—

FYNCHAM SANCTI MARTINI.

Taxatio Spiritualitatis.

Lord William Bardolf is patron of the same.

The Rector has a house with 30 acres of land.

The value of the Rectory, with the portion of Carow Abbey, xxii marks.

The said portion of Carow in the same is xlii^{iv}.

The Rector's tenths xxix^{iv}. The Abbess' tenths i^{iv}.

Procurations v^{iv}. Synodals ii^{iv}. Peter's pence xvi^{iv}.

Observe that (nota quod) the Rector has a fold-right (faldam)² of 200 sheep.

The advowson of this church was anciently in the Grandcourt family. Thomas de Grandcourt grants it by deed, sans date, to Roger his brother; and on the 11th of May, 1304 (Edward I), Roger de Grandcourt remitted all his right in the said advowson to his Lord, Hugh Bardolf. In the year 1345, or thereabouts, John Lord Bardolf granted the advowson to the Prior of Shouldham; and in 1350 *the Rectory was appropriated* to the said monastery, with consent of the Bishop of

¹ St. Martin was Bishop of Tours, in France, 26 years. He died A.D. 400. He had been a soldier, and was so greatly esteemed by the French that they carried his helmet with them into their wars.—*Bp. Mart.*

² For understanding this *fold-right* see notes 2, 3, on the possessions of Hermerus, in Domes-day.

Norwich, William Bateman. A *Vicarage* was settled, and the Vicar was to have a convenient dwelling, and £10 per annum. Again, in 1354, this appropriation¹ was further revised, and the Vicar was to have the small tithes, viz., "hay, wool, milk, flax, hemp, "chickens, colts, lambs, pigs, eggs, pigeons, geese, "ducks, honey, wax, apples, pears, plants, fruit, "wood, mills, turf, mortuaries," and glebe lands of the benefice, and a pension of 100s. per annum.

On the dissolution of Shouldham Abbey, in 1538, this lay Rectory passed from it to the Crown. In 1574, Queen Elizabeth leased it, by demise of the Crown, to Thomas Drury for 21 years, he paying £8 per annum; and afterwards to Wm. Guybon², Gent., and Ann and Frances, his daughters, from whom it has come to the present impropiator, Mr. Hebgin.

The patronage of the Vicarage still remained in the Crown, and in the Act for its consolidation with St. Michael's Rectory in 1744 it is retained in the form of an alternate right of presentation to the united benefice.

In the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* of 1291, St. Martin's Rectory is valued at £14 13s. 4d. In the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of 1535, the Vicarage is returned at £10. In the *Townson MS.* of 1659, at £10; "first fruits "none, tenths xx^s, synodals ii^s, procurations ii^s vi^d. "Patron the King, and Roger Gunson Vicar."

In all the terriers down to 1716 the Vicarage house is mentioned, after which time it disappears.

It may be useful, as it is fair, here to call attention to the operation of the system of the appropriation of tithes, and the settlement of vicarages, as affecting the

¹ It may be here explained that an *appropriation* is where church revenues have been conveyed to some ecclesiastical body or corporation. An *impropriation* is where they are held by a layman, *improperly*! according to Sir Henry Spelman, on *Tithes*, ch. xxix., p. 137. But the terms are frequently used indiscriminately.

² The Guybons were a very respectable Norfolk family. A branch, connected with the Clipsbys of Clipsby, lived at Oby Hall from 1600 to 1692.—*Oby Register*. In 1601, "Richard Guibon was slayne in fight by "one Clarke of Fincham."—*Downham Register*.

clergy. It commenced about the time of the Norman invasion, or perhaps earlier. The monasteries and convents got possession of at least one third of the tithes. They appointed their *Vicar* for the duties of the parish, and gave him for his maintenance generally a fixed payment, varying from five to ten pounds. When the monasteries were dissolved, the Rectories, or large tithes appropriated by them, went to the Crown, instead of reverting to the Church. These increased in value *pari passu* with the land, whilst the money payment to the Vicar remained the same. In the case here the great tithes of St. Martin's church now in the Impropiator have increased, like all other property in land, some twenty or thirty fold, whilst the pension to the Vicar, payable out of them, is still the 100s, and no more.

2. The PARISH CHURCH of St. Martin's is "a strong and handsome building, standing in the middle of the town, and so large that it is capable of receiving more than twice the inhabitants of the whole town."¹ Mr. Forby says that it is "a uniform and unmixed specimen of the architecture of Henry VI, finished about 1460, judging from a bequest to the building of the tower."²

It was no doubt a restoration or rebuilding, about that time, of old St. Martin's church,³ on the exact site, and partly on its walls. All the windows are of this date, being of the Perpendicular style, and a close inspection will shew that many of them, especially those on the north side, are insertions within earlier Transition

¹ *Act of Consolidation*, 18th Geo. II, No. 28.

² Dawson Turner's *Blomefield Illustrated*, vol. vii., British Mus. Add. MSS. 23,030.

³ Adam de Fyncham, who died in 1338, bequeaths his "body to be buried in the church of St. Martyn, near to his wife Annabel."—See his Will.

and Decorated work. The western door-way of the tower, and its two upper stories, are of the same date. On the south side, the outer wall, with its buttresses, appears to have been rebuilt from the ground, but is awkwardly joined to the ends of the aisle, as the coping plainly shews. Even the door-way within the porch exhibits a setting on of later work over earlier,¹ at about half-way of its height, the old stoup or water basin partly remaining in the wall.

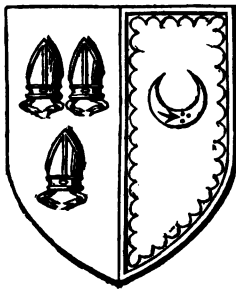
The bequest by Simon Fyncham in 1458, already alluded to, runs thus: "To the fabric of the *belfry* of "the said church vii¹ vi¹ viii^d, to be paid in seven years "next following in equal portions."² There is a date on one of the hammer-beams of the roof on the north side, but the second figure, the most important, is indistinct and perplexing. Some read it 1188, which is clearly incorrect; others 1488, which is more probable; and others 1588, which, however, could only have reference to repairs.

The Church consists of nave, two aisles and chancel, all covered with lead. The tower is lofty and well proportioned, except perhaps that the upper and later portions are a little too heavy for the older foundations, the buttresses appearing to be rather strained. The arms of Fincham are on these buttresses, as well as on the battlements above, testifying to the liberality of Simon Fyncham's benefaction. The total length of the Church is 114 feet, and the breadth of it 44 feet. The vault of the nave is supported on ten piers, five on each side, their capitals on the north side being of a plainer construction than those on the south. Over these are ten clerestory windows, five of them of three lights each, and the other five, on the north, of only two. The roof is handsome, of oak, having its hammer beams ornamented with carved work terminating in

¹ This was pointed out to me by the Rev. E. Blencowe, Rector of West Walton, whose acute observation and practised eye detected similar evidences all round the church.

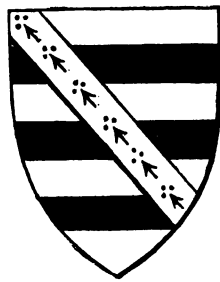
² See his last *Testament*.

figure heads, angels apparently alternating with others less pleasing. No part of the architecture of this church can be called rich, except perhaps the external buttresses of the south side, which have very elegant and beautifully crocketed pinnacles. The windows formerly contained much painted glass, a few old fragments of which are preserved in the north window of the chancel. The arms of Fincham are on the door-way of the rood-loft stairs, and also on the screen. On the inner or chancel side of the screen are the arms of William Bateman, Bishop of Norwich, who sanctioned the appropriation of this Rectory, and settlement of the Vicarage, in 1354. This shield, however, could not have been in the old church in his time, as the Bishops of Norwich did not impale their private arms with those of the see, on one shield, until 1575, as shewn by Mr. Taylor.¹ It was probably erected at the time of some repairs of the screen or chancel. A wood cut of this shield² and that of Fincham³ is here subjoined.



Bishop Bateman.

Sable, a crescent ermine, in a bordure engrailed, *argent*; Impaling the arms of the see, *Azure*, 3 mitres *or*, 2 and 1.



Fincham.

Argent, three bars *sable*, a bend over all, ermine.

¹ See *Index Monasticus*, pp. xxii and xxxi.

² There is a slight error in the engraving of this shield. The inner line round the engrailing is superfluous. Also the *ermine* in the crescent should be in *three or four perpendicular*.

³ The Fincham arms as now used have been surmounted by a crest, "a hind's head, erased, or, with a sprig of holly in its mouth, vert," with this motto, "Arbore latet opacâ."—*Burke*.

A few years ago the condition of St. Martin's Church formed no exception to the state of the churches in general in this deanery. The work of restoration commenced in 1844, when the tower was well repaired, and a new clock and peal of bells erected, at a total cost of £280. In 1847 the nave was cleared of its old decayed unsightly pews and pens, of every colour and shape; and fire engine, long ladders, buckets, wheelbarrows and bricks, were summarily removed from the house of God. New massive seats and benches of appropriate design were erected, and much other new work done, at a cost of about £325. In almost every year since then there has been some additional contribution to the "strength and beauty of the sanctuary." A very large and handsome window in the tower, erected to the memory of Mr. G. Aylmer, by his family, and containing figures of the four evangelists, is by Wilmshurst, of London. Others of similar beauty and workmanship in the south aisle are by the same artist. The most eastern of these contains the Fincham arms, between those of the See of Norwich, and of the present Archdeacon of Norfolk, *Bouverie*. The next window to this illustrates the Resurrection of Christ; the next the Crucifixion; and the two last towards the porch are of cast quarries by Powell. These last four, with another at the west end of this aisle, are the munificent gift of a parishioner. The porch also has been completely renovated—the chancel much improved—a choir comfortably seated—and a valuable musical instrument provided—besides external restorations—all by resident parishioners, whose names need not be further mentioned, but who have deserved well of their church.

There were formerly two chantries, or chapels, in this church, one at the east end of each aisle, having each their own altar, &c. These belonged to the Fincham family, having been founded and endowed by

them. Of the origin of one of them, we have the history in the will of John Fyncham, dated February 7th, 1494. He gives out of his manor of Burnham Deepdale, ("except such lands as lie in Brancastre, west of "Downgate or Dalegate"), sufficient profits and issues to found a chantry in St. Martin's church, and mass is appointed "to be saide for his soule there," "or els, "in tyme of necessitie sicknes or trowbels or fowle "wedir, or any man or woman may not labor so far," then "in the chapell of oure lady: being edefied in my "maner [i.e., manor house] of Fyncham, my brother. "Sir' Nicholas Fyncham to do such service, if he like "it; his salarie to be six marks and his boord, so that "he be content to goo and bord with my said son the "elder John."²

We see in the institution of these chantries³ one of the worst errors of the Papal religion, viz, the doctrine of purgatory,

"In prayers thus shaped amiss, and dirges sung,

"For souls whose doom is fixed."—*Wordsworth*.

In this chantry there is a remarkable aperture, penetrating the chancel wall obliquely, affording a view of the elevation of the host,⁴ at the high altar. Hence it is called a *hagioscope*, or holy view. It is not common.

¹ "Sir" was formerly the title of a priest, and so used by Shakespeare, and other writers.

² This allusion to the *elder John* is remarkable. He means the elder of his *two sons John*, living at the same time.—See *Pedigree*.

³ All these chantries were suppressed in the first year of Edward VI, as being superstitious, and their revenues were given to the Crown, or sold. According to Dugdale, the number of religious houses, &c., suppressed in this and the preceding reign was, "monasteries and "priors, 645; colleges and hospitals, 715; chantries and free chapels, "2874."

⁴ Hostia=victim, sacrifice, *host*, the consecrated wafer, supposed to be transubstantiated into the body of Christ, and before which the people were to prostrate themselves, when summoned by the ringing of a bell. This bell still remains in a chantry of Sedgford church, in this county.

3. MONUMENTS, EPITAPHS, &c., in St. Martin's Church.

On the floor of the church are several large black marble stones, dedicated to members of the Fincham family buried here. Their brasses have been stolen, except one small effigy of a woman in her shroud. This was found in 1847, and fixed in its present position for preservation. Some of the memorial inscriptions are fortunately preserved in Weever's *Funeral Monuments*, p. 819, as follows:—

Orate pro anima Elizabethæ quondam uxoris Symonis Fyncham Armigeri, et unius filiarum et hæredum Johs Tendring de Brockdgn in comitatu Suffol¹: Armig: quæ quidem Elizabetha obiit MCCCCXXXIII [1464].

Orate pro anima Johs Fyncham filii et hæredis Symonis Fyncham de Fyncham armig: qui obiit VI die Septembr: anno dni MCCCCXXXVI [1496].

Orate pro anima Joh: filii et hæredis Johs Fyncham filii Symonis Fyncham qui obiit ultimo die Aprilis MCCCCXXXIX [1499].

In the wall near the screen, but originally lying in the south aisle, is a broken brass with this inscription, completed where defective from the *History of Norfolk*:—

¹ This is an error. Brockdish is in Norfolk, but the Tendrings being a Suffolk family, the origin of the mistake is apparent.

EPITAPHIUM GENEROSISSIMI HEROIS,

THOMÆ TOWNSENDI.¹

Elizabetha suo tumultum charissima conjux
 Townsendo, insigni condit amore, viro.
 Hunc terræ indignum patriæ cælestis ad oras,
 Flore juventutis, mors properata tulit.
 Si tu his denos annos adjunxeris octo,
 Townsendi ætatis tempora certa scies.
 Hic jacet, et tristi claudat mors sæva sepulchro
 Membra, sedes superas mens tamen alta petit.
 Ærumnas æquâ virtutis lance libravit,
 Si quid peccavit, ultio virtus erat.
 Injurias omnes absorbuit atque retudit ;
 Duro serenus tempore vultus erat.
 Heu fata dura nimis, quæ te fecere sepultum
 Pulvere, quem domini gloria celsa beat.
 Conjuge prole domo felix, et funere felix,
 Multum flenda bonis, stirps generosa, vale.²

Obiit xii Januar : Anno Dni 1572.

¹ In the 13th Edward II, Richard *Atte-tunnes-end* conveyed lands to Adam de Fyncham. The name is derived from the residence, *at-town's-end*, hence *towns-end*. So in like manner we have *Att-hill*, *Att-wood*, *Att-field*, *Att-more*, or *mere*, and *Att-gate*, &c., as surnames.

² EPITAPH of the most noble gentleman,
 THOMAS TOWNSEND.

Elizabeth, his dearest wife, erects this monument,
 With marked affection, to her husband Townsend.
 An early death removed him, in the flower of youth,
 Unworthy of this world, to a celestial land.
 If you will add just twice ten years to eight,
 You will certainly know the time of Townsend's life.
 He lies here, and cruel death encloses in the mournful tomb
 His body, whilst his high spirit seeks its rest in heaven.
 He weighed his cares in virtue's even scales,
 And if in ought he sinned, his virtues were his atonement.
 He forgave and forgot all personal wrongs,
 And in hard times his countenance was calm.
 Alas, the too hard fate which brought thee to the dust,
 Whom now God's glory in high heaven doth bless !
 Oh, happy in wife, in children, home, and death,
 So mourned by all the good, of noble stock, farewell !
 He died Jan. 12th, 1572.

On a stone in the centre of the nave, brought here from St. Michael's church, are these lines :—

Here lieth the bodies of Robert and Sarah,
Son and daughter of Anthony King, of Tilney, gent,
Who were buried on the 2nd and 15th October, 1683.

Hail happy souls, who, like their angels, were
Young, active, chaste, and free from vice ;
And now are called by God's indulgent care
To dwell with them in Paradise.
God grant we by repentance may obtain
What you by innocence did earlier gain.

In quoting these epitaphs of the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries, I would remind my parishioners of the errors they respectively contain. The first, "Pray for the soul," was an invention of the Romish church, and exploded at the Reformation. It finds no warrant in the inspired scriptures, which nowhere exhort us to pray for the dead, much less to dead saints, as mediators, there being "but one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." The second contains a plea congenial to human nature at all times : "If he sinned, his virtues compensated for it"! This is great presumption. The only atonement for even one sin is the sacrifice of "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Then also we must be careful to understand what is meant by the "innocence" of little children. It is for us indeed to imitate them in the simplicity of their life and character, but not to build the hope of heaven upon it, for they are "born in sin and the children of wrath"; and both *their* innocence and *our* repentance have that in them which needs to be repented of.

The epitaphs of the succeeding century partake too often of even a more objectionable character. So exceedingly laudatory are they, as to be sometimes irreconcilable

with common truth. I do not say that those which remain to be noticed are faulty to such an extreme, but they are surely not good specimens for our imitation, however elegant in their classical conceptions. The following was brought here from St. Michael's church, where Mr. Baker was Rector at the time of his death :—

Sub felicis resurrectionis spe¹,
Christi præstolans epiphaniam,
Hic juxta situs est
Reverendus vir, Daniel Baker, M.A.,
Hujus Ecclesiæ per XL annos
Rector.

Orthodoxæ Christi Ecclesiæ,
Dictis, scriptis, precibus, exemplo,
Incomparabile propugnaculum ;
Divinæ Jobi patientiæ,
(Quam poesi depinxit),
Verus vitæ imitator.

Idem ex
Indefessâ operâ in studiis,
Assiduâ pietate in Deum,
Rarâ amænitate in suos,
Spectatâ probitate in omnes,
Æternum admirandus.

Annorum satur ad cælos migravit

Feb : XVII^{mo},

Anno { Salutis MVCCXXII.
Ætatis LXIX.

¹ In the hope of a joyful resurrection,
Waiting for the coming of Christ,
Near this spot reclines
The Rev. Daniel Baker, M.A.,
Forty years Rector of this Church.
He was an incomparable bulwark
Of the orthodox church of Christ,
In his discourses, writings, prayers and example.
In his life a faithful imitator
Of the divine patience of Job,
Which he depicted in verse.
Such a man,
For his untiring labours in study,

The epitaph to the Rev. Joseph Forby, LL.B., is sufficiently intricate to be unintelligible to most ordinary scholars, and of course to everybody else. There are more than forty words between the nominative case and its verb, and a literal translation is thus rendered very difficult :—

M.S.¹

Josephi Forby, LL.B.
 Cum sancti Michaelis Rectoris,
 Tum sancti Martini Vicarii,
 Ultimi, in hac villa,
 Et dignissimi ;
 Qui, harum Ecclesiarum
 Per alternam cum rege vicem
 Donandi simul et tenendi
 In Parlamento identitatem effectans,
 Opus hoc,
 Calculi dolore suppressus,
 Male ominatum et posthumum,
 Marthæ viduæ mæstissimæ
 Marmor hoc pie ponenti,
 14^{to} Augusti,
 Anno { Æt : 45^{to}
 { Sal : com : 1744^{to}
 Occumbens perficiendum reliquit.

—
 Hujus ad dextram,
 Johannes filius natu minimus,
 Annos natus 8 circiter,
 Martii 4^{to} 1745
 Expirans obdormit.

His assiduous piety towards God,
 His rare affability to his friends,
 His conspicuous honesty towards all,
 Must be for ever admired.
 Full of years he passed into the heavens,
 Feb. 17, 1722. Aged 69.

¹ Sacred to the memory of
 Joseph Forby, Bachelor of Laws,
 The last Rector of St. Michael's,

Within the altar rails are also the following memoirs of members of the same family :

- JOSEPH FORBY, L.L.B. (as above), died Aug. 14, 1744, aged 45.
 MARTHA, relict of Joseph Forby, L.L.B., and wife of William Harvey, died May 20, 1775, aged 80 years.
 JOHN FORBY (their youngest son), died March 4, 1745.
 JOSEPH FORBY, M.A., died April 25, 1799, aged 65.
 CONSTANCE (*his wife*), died March 16, 1789, aged 57.
 SUSAN FORBY, relict of Thomas Forby, of Stoke Ferry, died May 1st, 1824, aged 92.
 ROBERT FORBY (*their son*), M.A., died Dec. 20th, 1825, aged 66.
 MARTHA FORBY (*their daughter*), died Nov. 10th, 1828, aged 67.
 ANNE HELSHAM, died July 12th, 1822, aged 28.

On the chancel walls :

- JOHN HEBGIN, *Gent*, died Jan. 6th, 1831, aged 66.
 MARY HEBGIN (*his wife*), died August 2nd, 1848, aged 80.
 HENRY YOUNG, *Gent*, (sixteen years Church-Warden of this parish,) died Jan. 12, 1848, aged 56.

On the chancel floor :

- ROBERT POOLE, *Senior*, died Nov. 2nd, 1749, aged 57.
 ROBERT POOLE, *Junior*, died Sep. 22nd, 1757, aged 27.

On the wall of the north aisle :

- JAMES BARSHAM, died July 27th, 1854, aged 71.

And last Vicar of St. Martin's,
 In this village, and the most worthy :
 Who, whilst effecting in Parliament
 A consolidation, (both as to the presentation
 And the holding,) of these Churches,
 By an alternate turn with the King,
 Being arrested by a calculous complaint,
 And dying, August 14, 1744, aged 45,
 Left the inauspicious and posthumous work
 To be completed by his disconsolate widow,
 Who in her piety erects this monument.

On his right hand sleeps
 John his youngest son,
 Who expired March 4th, 1745,
 Being about eight years of age.

On the wall of the south aisle :

ELLEN, wife of THOMAS WETHERELL, died May 21, 1733, aged 37.

JOHN BARSHAM, died July 3rd, 1853, aged 81.

WILLIAM MEDCALF, (late of Tilney St. Lawrence,) born Dec. 16th, 1776, died May 21st, 1846.

In the windows of the south aisle :

JOHN DE FINCHAM, died Sept. 6th, 1496, aged 60.

JOHN BARSHAM (as above), July 3rd, 1853, aged 81.

JOHN BARSHAM DEAN, died Aug. 5th, 1830, aged 18.

JOHN AYLMER (of Cranworth), died April 5th, 1853, aged 63.

On the floor near the font :

ELIZABETH, daughter of — CRASK, and Catherine his wife, died Jan. 1, 17—.

In the tower window :

GEORGE AYLMER, died July 23rd, 1853, aged 86.

“This window was erected by his surviving relatives,

“In token of their affectionate regard.”

4. ST. MARTIN'S VESTRY.

The vestry of this church is very good. The history of its foundation is in the Will of Nicholas Fyncham, Clk., who died in 1503, and was buried in the same. He says : “My bodye to be beryed in the vestiary of “Sent Martyns Chirche &c.” “Item. I wyll that “myn executors performe and fynyshe up the vestiary “that I have begune, as ferforth as my goods wyll “extend, a cordyng as I have shewyd on to them by “my mouth a fore tyme.” Like the church itself, however, this vestry is built upon older work, and much of the old walls remains. It had formerly an upper room in which a school was kept. The will then proceeds to

create an endowment for the parish clerk, which will be noticed hereafter. It is an exceedingly curious document, and will be found amongst the wills of the Finchams. The lead from the roof of this vestry was sold in the year 1806 for £52 17s. 6d., improperly, to supply funds for repairing the south aisle. The table is the old sounding board, and underneath, on the inner rim of its circumference, is this inscription: "Gregorye Watson, servant to the Right Worshipful Sir Francis Gawdy, Knight, made this at his own charge, anno dni, 1604." Its present cover is a curious old altar cloth, with the sacred monogram and date thus: "I.H.S. 1667." Here is also the old parish chest, with its ponderous lid and triple iron fastenings, according to canon law; but it is not deemed prudent now to leave anything very valuable in its keeping, a certain entry in the parish books reminding us that that which hath been might be again: "1824, Ap. 19. Advertisements for an attempted robbery of the church, 17s. 6d." The registers, therefore, and the plate are kept elsewhere. The former will be noticed under a separate head; the latter may be here described, viz.,

1. A good cup, of old silver, with cover. "THE TOWNE OF FINCHAM, 1568."
2. A smaller one, very elegant. "F. S. M."
3. An old paten, of silver, "ex dono Mary Baker, 1724."
4. A new alms dish, 1850. Sheffield plate.
5. A large new paten, the same. "Gift of Mr. Hebgin, 1855."
6. A wine bottle, electro-plated. "1856."

5. The FONTS of Deepdale and Fincham.

The history of these two fonts is sufficiently connected to admit of their being noticed together in this work, especially as I have known Deepdale church from my infancy. In the first place an antiquarian writer (the Rev. Samuel Pegge, F.A.S.), in the *Archæologia*, vol. x, pp. 177, 185, says of the Deepdale font, that, "as a curious and singular ancient laver," it is "only paralleled by one at Fincham." It is scarcely less "curious and singular" that it should ever have been found here, occupying the mean and profane position of a common cistern in the Rectory garden. How this happened will presently appear.

(1). The Deepdale font is amongst the oldest in the diocese, and if not to be classed with those of Winchester and Lincoln cathedrals in their high antiquity, it is certainly not much later. It is undoubtedly of Saxon origin. Its most remarkable feature, and in which it appears to be unique, is that its historical illustrations are not from Scripture, but from the agricultural and domestic life of our Saxon forefathers. It is carved out of a block of Caen stone, and is two feet five inches square. "The embellishments on three of its sides," continues Mr. P., "(the fourth, being placed against a pillar, [wall more probably,] never had any decoration, but only a foliage,) were, till lately (1790), totally incrustured by frequent white-washings; but the present worthy and sagacious rector, Mr. Crowe, being a gentleman of inquisitive disposition, gave himself the trouble of denuding the whole, so that it is entirely owing to him that this truly venerable monument has regained its pristine appearance." He then proceeds to give Mr. Crowe's description of these embellishments, which he calls "antique portraitures," adding his own comments and corrections.

Dr. Sayers, Physician and Antiquarian, of Norwich, also published (in 1808) some account of this font in his *Disquisitions*, p. 257. He says: "The employments of most of the figures introduced may be detected with sufficient certainty, and I cannot hesitate to believe that it is the work of a Saxon artist. There are several similar figures on some circular stones in the pavement of the chapel of the Holy Trinity in Canterbury Cathedral; and also on the porch of St. Margaret's Church, York." He then gives his opinion also of the several employments or occupations of the figures in the twelve respective divisions.

It is very extraordinary that none of these gentlemen, particularly Mr. Crowe, who himself removed the whitewash incrustations, nor any other person since, until now, should have discovered that *the names of at least six of the months* of the year are actually inscribed upon the font, in their respective compartments, in fair old Roman capitals, about an inch in height,—some of them written upwards and others downwards, and the rest altogether omitted for want of space, the figures themselves occupying the whole field, if I may so speak. They had been overlooked in the rough and jagged surface of the stone, and somewhat injured probably by the tools used in the cleaning. I had just sent my remarks and conjectures to the press, when I determined fortunately to examine the font again more closely, having a very convenient opportunity for so doing. I quickly deciphered the months of JANUARY, FEBRUARY and MARCH. There is not a letter for April or May; but JUNE, JULY and AUGUST are distinctly indicated; and the last four months are also left for the discrimination of the observer, without any text to assist him. I will now proceed to describe these emblematical subjects in order, adopting the opinions of the above mentioned authors, where they are not rendered

untenable by more recent observation and discovery. The names of the months expressed in capitals are copied from the font itself.

1. JANVARIVS. A figure seated in a chair with a drinking horn in his hand.¹
2. —EBRVARIVS. A figure also seated, with his foot upon a hearth stone, warming himself. "Sitting "at the door of his house," (Dr. Sayers), is not likely for February.
3. MARTIVS. A husbandman digging with a spade.
4. [*Aprilis.*] A woodman with a pruning hook, or hedging bill, in his right hand, and a branch of a tree in his left.
5. [*Maius.*] A figure with long hair, having a banner, indicating a procession, or perambulation, as customary in this month. In *Archæol.* it is called "a female figure," but long hair was worn by the men, if free and independent.²
6. JVNIVS. A husbandman with a weeding tool. Not a plough.
7. JVLIVS. A husbandman mowing.
8. AV - - - - A similar figure, binding up a sheaf.

¹ "The festive board of Christmas and *New Year* was called by the Saxons *Jöl* or *Yule*, and is marked in the Runic Calendar by a *horn erect*, and filled with *ale*, which is *öl*."—*The Ormulum*, a Saxon MS., lately published by the Rev. R. M. White, Rector of Slimbridge, Gloucestershire.

² See *The Saxon Home*, by Mr. Thrupp.

9. [*Septembris.*] A husbandman threshing corn.
10. [*Octobris.*] A figure grinding with the *Quern stones*.¹ Not (as in *Archæol.*) a vintager "pouring wine into a cask, from a bladder, through a funnel, &c." The drawing there is not faithful.
11. [*Novembris.*] A man slaughtering a pig. Suggesting ham and bacon for the winter.
12. [*Decembris.*] A merry-making at Christmas. Only two legs under the table, which Mr. Crowe thinks belong to the company, but Mr. Pegge to the table!

I may add that the *frieze* round the top of the font is ornamented with foliage and lions ; and further, that there are rusty traces of hinges and fastenings for a lid, which was locked down for fear of sorcery. "*Fontes baptismales sub serâ clausi teneantur propter sortilegia,*"—"some vulgar superstition better understood than explained."

"This venerable relic," says Dr. Sayers, "was judiciously entrusted (!) to my highly esteemed friend, the Rev. R. Forby, of Fincham. That gentleman, who well knows how to appreciate the 'res antiquæ laudis et artis,' has carefully preserved it in his garden, and has graced it with the following inscription :—

¹ This was first suggested by Mr. Blyth, of Sussex Farm ; and a glance will suffice to perceive that the two stones fit into each other, and that there is not the slightest resemblance to *casks*, *bladders*, or *funnels*."

² *Archæologia*, vol. x., p. 207.

Ne pereat indignum perire,¹
 Ne quo turpi contaminetur usu,
 Hoc baptisterium,
 Artis Anglo-Saxonicae opus,
 A studiosis novitatis
 Loco proprio deturbatum,
 Hic positum A.D. MDCCCVII.
 Id saltem antiqui juris obtinet,
 Ut non nisi celestem aquam capiat.²

In the year 1842, the Rector of Deepdale, my late lamented brother, with the zealous aid of his Churchwardens, succeeded in recovering their font, after an abstraction and detention at Fincham for 35 years; and the "venerable relic," "*a studiosis novitatis deturbatum*,"—rursus "*in loco proprio*" positum est!

(2.) THE ANCIENT FONT in St. Martin's church belonged originally to St. Michael's. It was brought here on the destruction of that church in 1744. We have seen that it has been called a parallel to that at Deepdale already described. It is perhaps not quite so old, and differs from it chiefly in having the subjects of its bas-reliefs taken from Scripture history. Blomefield's description of it, transferred to the *Archæologia*, vol. x, p. 190, is very poor and incorrect,

¹ That it might not unworthily perish,
 Nor be polluted by some baser use,
 This font, a work of Anglo-Saxon art,
 Thrown down from its proper place,
 By the busy lovers of novelty,
 Was erected here A.D. 1807.

It retains at least this much of its original privilege,
 That it receives only the waters of heaven.

² In the place of the old font, I set up in the garden about eleven years ago a simple graduated *rain-gauge*; and a table of its registered annual contents in inches is here given:—

YEAR.	INCHES.	YEAR.	INCHES.
1851	.. 26.63	1857	.. 20.48
1852	.. 35.34	1858	.. 19.42
1853	.. 21.36	1859	.. 24.84
1854	.. 21.02	1860	.. 30.12
1855	.. 19.11	1861	.. 20.66
1856	.. 23.64	Averaging nearly 24 inches annually.	

but it was then under whitewash and daub.¹ There is a better account of it in the British Museum,² but far from satisfactory, written probably under the same disadvantage. The font stands upon five slender modern pillars. It is 2ft. 7in. square. Its four sides, externally bordered with a cross moulding, consist each of three compartments under Saxon circular arches, exhibiting a series of sacred historical subjects. On the *North* side are figures of Adam and Eve, rude enough, with the tree of knowledge between them, representing the fall. On the *East* are the Magi, or wise men, each bearing an offering in the right hand. On the *South* the first portion contains a manger with an infant beneath two heads of cattle, and a star over them, shewing the birth of Christ at Bethlehem. The other two portions of this side contain figures of the Virgin and Joseph. On the *West* is first John the Baptist, pointing to our Saviour in the next division, coming up out of a pool within stone work, the dove descending upon him. The last of all is the figure of a Bishop with a crozier. The whole is covered with a new and massive lid. Not far from this font stands the stem of the proper font of this church, now supporting an alms box for the poor.

6. In the CHURCH-YARD there is but little to note. On the south side is a very large stone to the memory of William Corston, a native of the village. He was the first to introduce the manufacture of *British Leghorn* into this country, pronounced a national benefit by the Society of Arts, who awarded him a gold medal in

¹ The "dauber's bill," in 1766, was 12s.—*Old Parish Book*.

² Add. MSS. 23,030, being Mr. Dawson Turner's *Blomefield Illustrated*, vol. vii.

1805. He devoted himself very earnestly to the education of poor children, combining in his school the industrial occupation of plaiting straw with intellectual and religious instruction. He published a sketch of the life of Joseph Lancaster, whose system he pursued, and died in the 84th year of his age, A.D. 1843, greatly beloved and respected.

On the north side is a stone to the memory of John Galloway, formerly a seaman in the Royal Navy, and latterly for 18 years parish clerk. The following beautiful lines from "*Lyra Memorialis*" are appropriate to his character :—

Once did I think
Life's waves to tread,
In mine own strength ;
But soon in dread
I cried for help as I began to sink :
At length
The master took me by the hand,
And thus sustained I reached the heavenly land.
MATT. xiv. 30.

Of the rest we may say, from Gray's popular elegy :—

Their name, their years, spelt by the unlettered muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply ;
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

7. INCUMBENTS of St. Martin's church.

(1.) RECTORS.

- 1294. Edmund Bardolf, *Fryn's History of King John*.
- 1304. John de Wacton, presented by Hugh Lord Bardolf.
- 1310. Walter de Ratyngden, by the ladye Isabella Bardolf

- 1314. Simon Ayscheles, by the ladye Isabella.
- 1331. Thomas de Pultenye, by the lady Agnes Bardolf.
- 1333. Richard le Dyer, de Kiderminster, prebendary of Litchfield, by the lady Agnes, on the resignation of Pultenye.—*Deed, 11th Edward III, at Stow.*
- 1345. Richard le Dyer again, by the Prior of Shouldham, to whom Lord Bardolf had granted the advowson.

(2.) VICARS.

- 1350. John de Boys, first Vicar, by the Prior of Shouldham, when the Rectory was appropriated to that convent.
- 1351. Robert Coston, (not Costard.—*Bl.*) by the Prior and convent.
- 1361. Thomas de Sledmere, by the same.
- 1386. Thomas Virgil (not given by *Bl.*)—*Deed, 19 Richard II, at Stow.*
- 1400. Nicholas Essex, by the Prior, &c. Also Rector of Stockton.
- 1402. Matthew Aylmer, by the same, exchanged with Essex.
- 1402. Richard Person, or Pierson, de Walpole, by the same.
- 1404. Robert Folsham, on the resignation of Pierson, by the same.
- 1409. John Clerk, exchanging with Folsham, by the same.
- 1415. John Gyffe, or Juffe, (not given by *Bl.*)—*Will of John Fincham, at Stow.*
- 1424. Nicholas Thurston, alias *Muriell, Capellanus*.—*Deed, 33 Henry VI, at Stow.*
- 1455. Thomas Palmer, by the Prior, &c.
- 1493. Henry Kyrkeby, by the same.
- 1498. Lawrence Cootes.
- 1504. John Wenham, on the resignation of Cootes.
- 1506. Robert Davy, on the resignation of Wenham.
- 1534. Richard Sparhawke, on the death of Davy, by the Prior.
- 1545. Thomas Freke, who in 1562 is returned as "Presbyter non conjugatus satis doctus, residet, &c."
- 1586. Anthony Fletcher, by the Crown, after the dissolution of the Priory of Shouldham.
- 1587. Roger Gunson, by the Queen. Also Rector of Denver.
- 1615. William Parker, A.M., by the King. "Mast: William Parker, Vicar, was buried October 24, 1657."—*Fincham Register.*
- 1658. Francis Power is mentioned, as being succeeded at his death by
- 1658. Daniel Gardiner, admitted by the Commissioners at White-Hall, Aug. 4th.

- 1661. Daniel Gardiner, A.M., regularly appointed by the King.
"Bur. Sep. 30, 1682."—*Fincham Register*.
- 1682. Daniel Baker, A.M., by the King. "Bur. Feb. 20, 1723."—*Fincham Register*.
- 1723. Joseph Forby, LL.B., "ultimus Vicarius," died "Aug. 14, 1744."
—*Monumental Epitaph*. Bur. "Aug. 16, 1744."—*Fincham Register*.

(3.) RECTORS of the Consolidated Benefice.

- 1745. William Harvey, M.A., by Martha Forby (widow of the last incumbent), whom he married. He was also Rector of West Winch 55 years; and was buried at Crimplesham in 1787, aged 92.—*Crimplesham Register*.
- 1787. Joseph Forby, M.A., on his own petition. Buried "April 30, 1799."—*Fincham Register*.
- 1799. Robert Forby, M.A., the same. Buried "Dec. 24, 1825."—*Fincham Register*.
- 1826. Arthur Loftus, M.A., by the Lord Chancellor. Deprived Dec. 12, 1845.
- 1846. William Blyth, M.A., on his own petition.

CHAPTER VII.

RURAL DEANERY OF FINCHAM.

No precise time can be defined when the office of Rural Dean had its beginning in this country, but there is evidence for believing that it was in imitation of continental countries, about the end of the eleventh century. In the twelfth century subscriptions of Rural Deans to documents are by no means uncommon. A Rural Dean of Thetford is recorded by Blomefield in the year 1175, and soon after that time the institution was general. The appointment is generally in the Bishop, as in this diocese, and where it happens that the Archdeacon or clergy have a voice in the election, the Bishop has the power of a veto.¹

In the Diocese of Norwich the appointment formerly was by collation, which made it perpetual and for life; it is now by commission, and during pleasure.

The Rural Deanery is generally coterminous with the Hundred. The Deanery of Fincham coincides with the Hundred of Clackclose, and comprehends 33 churches, there being two parishes having two churches each, and two with none.

The duties of the Rural Dean were anciently very extensive, including not only the visitation of churches, parsonage houses and schools, but also testamentary jurisdiction, and other ecclesiastical functions, now exercised only by the Bishop and Archdeacon, in their respective Courts.

The Rural Dean had originally his seal of office, in

¹ See *Horæ Decanice Rurales*, by W. Dansey, M.A., vol. i, p. 116.

the proper use of which he was restricted by Canon Law. Blomefield says that all the Rural Deans of the Norwich diocese had their peculiar seals, several of which he had seen, but only two are described by him, viz., those of Norwich and Fincham. Of the latter he says: "I have now before me the probate of the will of Thomas Westhowe, of Boketon, (Boughton,) at Downham, dated Dec. 15th, 1413, and proved by Hugh Birdham, Dean of Fincham, to which is affixed an oblong seal of red wax; the impress a bird, probably a finch, on a tree, and a star in chief, and this legend, SIGILLUM DECANATUS DE FYNCHAM, expressing both his own and his Deanery's name in that device."¹

The office had its own proper revenues up to the time of Henry VIII. In the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* of 1291 they are valued at xxx^s, but even this amount gradually diminished, until in 1536 the decanal income is stated in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* as follows:

"Decanatus de Fyncham.

"Thomâ Oxburgh Decano.

"Valet per annum xliii^s iv^d.

"Decima inde xvi^d.

These emoluments we may suppose went the way of other ecclesiastical confiscations at this time.

DEANS OF FINCHAM.

1199. Galfridus,² witness to a deed, 1 John, at *Stow*.

S. D. Hugh. "Hugone decano de Fyncham," circa Henry III, at *Stow*.³

1308. Hugh de Swaffham, Rector of Barton St. Mary.

1326. Edmund de Welle, collated by the Bishop of Norwich.

¹ *Hist. of Norfolk*, vol. ii, p. 227.

² *Bugdale Monast. Angl.*, vol. iii, p. 637.

³ In another deed, somewhat later, occurs as witness "Hugh fratre Decani;" also, "Samson filio Decani de Fyncham," evidencing a married ecclesiastic.

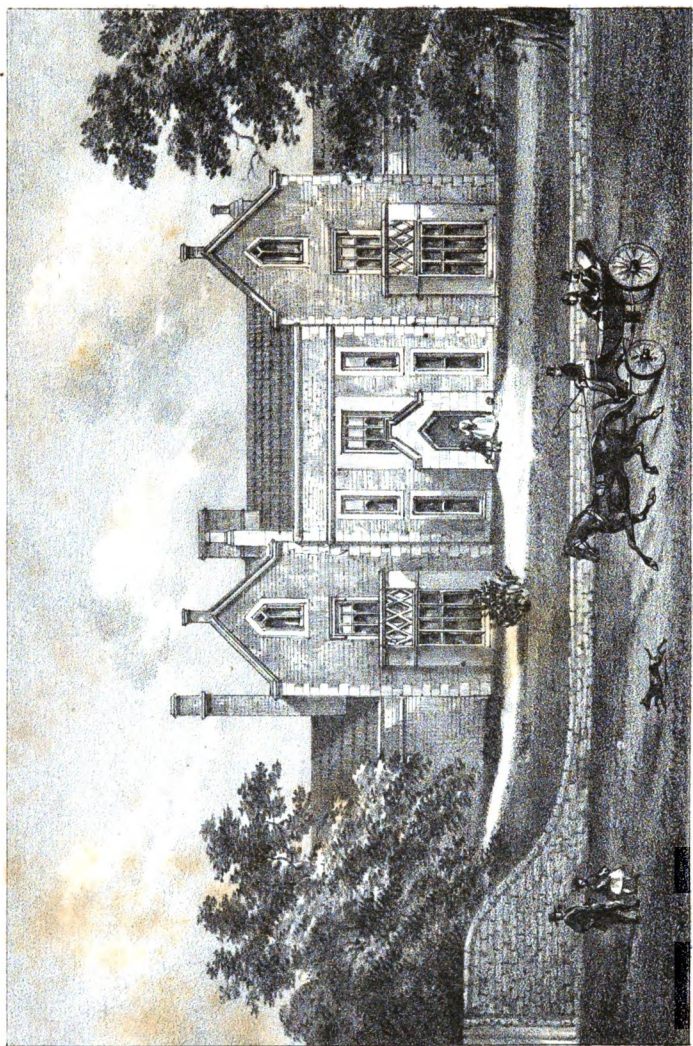
- 1847. Richard de Norwich, by the same.
- 1849. Matthew de Ashton, by the same.
- 1849. Roger de Stalham, by the same.
- 1850. Gilbert de Ashton, by the same.
- 1877. William de Oxburgh, by the same.
- 1888. Robert Takel, prebendary of Litchfield and Coventry.
- 1889. John de Mundeford, collated, &c.
- 1893. Hugh Birdham. Also Prior of Wirnecy.
- 1429. Thomas Aspion, on the death of Birdham.
- 1497. William Porteland, A.M., collated, &c.
- 1501. John Aberfield. Also Rector of Great Cressingham.
- 1518. Thomas Bilney, on the death of Aberfield.
- 1535. Thomas Oxburgh, as appears from the *Val. Eccl.* quoted above.

From this time the office fell into disuse and decay. It has never been proscribed or interfered with by law. Its general revival was contemplated by Queen Anne, who committed the subject to Convocation, "to be debated and considered;" but "discordancies and jealousies being the chief features of that body, the project fell abortive to the ground."¹ Individual Bishops, however, have of late years at their discretion revived the office. Bishop Stanley did so in this diocese in 1842, and he says in his instructions to the Rural Deans, that it has been done "in 18 English dioceses since the year 1800, and is recognised by the legislature in recent statutes." His object is "not to interfere with the jurisdiction of the Archdeacons, but to assist them in some branches of their duty, extremely onerous in this extensive diocese, which contains 1038 parishes." The following have been appointed:—

- 1842. William Gale Townley, Rector of Upwell.
- " John Francis Edwards, Rector of Holme with South Runceton.
- 1846. William Joseph Parkes, Rector of Hilgay.
- 1847. William Blyth, Rector of Fincham.

¹ *Hæc Dec. Rur.*, vol. ii, p. 172.





R. & Groom Wilkeson & C^o. Litho.

THE RECTORY HOUSE, FINCHAM.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RECTORY, GLEBE HOUSE, &c.

1. By the Rectory is generally meant in common speech the *Manse* or *Glebe House* of the Benefice, but more correctly it is the designation of the Benefice itself with its revenues and privileges. There were formerly two Rectories in Fincham, with their proper houses, as already before shewn. The alienation of St. Martin's rectorial tithes, and subsequently the disappearance of the house, is mentioned in the account of that church. I proceed, then, to notice the benefice, as it now is, viz., "the united Rectory of Fincham St. Michael's, with the Vicarage of St. Martin's annexed," this being its title by the Act of Consolidation obtained in 1744.

By this Act the patronage of the living is settled in the Crown, and the heirs of the Rev. Joseph Forby, alternately, the latter to have the first two turns, on account of the superior value of St. Michael's, which was previously in his own gift.

The glebe lands at that time consisted of no fewer than 109 pieces, and contained by admeasurement 60 acres. These were reduced, both in the number of pieces, and total amount, by the Inclosure Act of 1772. 48a. 3r. 1p. then lying in the common fields were exchanged for 27a. 1r. 33p. nearer home. This has since been further reduced by a small grant for a school site, and by the sale of about 12 acres for the redemption of the land tax (which was £19 12s.), the total now being 31a. 2r. 25p.

Under the Tithe Commutation Act the proportion of the Tithe Rent Charge agreed to be paid to the Rector is £675, together with £15 from his own glebe; and that to the Impropriator is £325; varying with the price of corn on an average of every seven years.

The Impropriator pays to the Rector the old pension of 100 shillings, settled upon the Vicar of St. Martin's when the Rectory of the same was appropriated to Shouldham Priory in 1350.

On the other hand, the out-goings are, a pension of £3 15s. 4d. to Sir Thomas Hare, Bart.; a rent-charge of £2 to Theodore V. Webb, Esq., of Great Gransden, Cambridgeshire; and the usual synodals and procurations to the Bishop and Archdeacon respectively, as follows:—

	Synodals.	Procurations.	Acquittance.	Total.
St. Michael's	2s.	5s. 0d.	4d.	7s. 4d.
St. Martin's	2s.	7s. 7½d.	4d.	9s. 11½d.
				<hr/> 17s. 3½d. <hr/>

At the Bishop's primary visitation in 1858 the synodals were 5s. and the "exhibits" 13s. 4d.¹ From the gross income of the living deduct largely for rates, taxes, repairs, &c.

2. The RECTORY HOUSE is old, but commodious and well built. It consists of three stories, with high-pitched roofs and gables. By a date on the large central chimney, in one of the attic chambers, it appears to have been built, or rebuilt, in the year 1624. It presents a handsome front to the north, and is well situated, with its garden and glebe lands on the south.

¹ These *exhibits* are for the exhibition of Letters of Orders, Licenses, &c., and having them stamped.

3. Among the resident INCUMBENTS of past times reference may be made first to the Rev. Daniel Baker. He was Rector of St. Michael's and Vicar of St. Martin's 40 years, ending in 1722. Greatly tried in the furnace of affliction, he appears to have excelled in faith and patience. The register tells the melancholy tale of the death of his mother, first wife, and eight children, in quick succession. These afflictive visitations directed his thoughts particularly to the book of Job, which he forthwith wrote in verse. This work was published "at the Peacock, in St. Paul's Church-yard, London, A.D. 1706." The author says in his preface: "It having pleased Almighty God to afflict me, (as he did his servant Job,) with great losses, "and other occasions of sorrow, I resolved to make "that holy man my pattern, and to follow his steps as "near as I could, in patience, constancy, faith, and "submission to the will of God." His version of what may be considered the most sublime passage of the patriarch is here subjoined, as a specimen of his ability and style :—

Oh, that my words were printed in a book,
 Or deep engraven on the solid rock,
 That they might stand for ever firm, and be
 The witness of my faith to late posterity !
 For I believe and surely know that my
 Redeemer lives, and reigns above the sky.
 To him all power belongs, and he will save
 My soul, and raise my body from the grave.
 Although my flesh, now pained with sickness, must
 Hereafter fail, and crumble into dust ;
 Although my skin, now spread with sores, must feed
 The hungry worms that in dark charnels breed ;
 Yet at the latter day I shall arise,
 And meet my God descending from the skies.

JOB, xix. 25.

In proof and illustration of the soundness of Mr. Baker's teaching in the church, we may refer to the texts from Scripture which are on its walls, and which were put up during his incumbency, in the year 1717, on the screen, and removed to their present places in 1847.

On the death of Mr. Baker, the Rev. Joseph Forby was presented to the living by his father, Mr. Thomas Forby, in 1723. He died in 1744, and was succeeded by William Harvey, who married his widow, and died in 1787. The next incumbent was Joseph, son of the aforesaid Joseph Forby, who, having married Constance Harvey, died without issue in 1799. He was succeeded by the Rev. Robert Forby, his nephew, son of Thomas Forby, of Stoke Ferry, and grandson of the first Joseph. He was taken off suddenly in his bath in 1825, the living having thus been in this family for rather more than 100 years.

Of the Rev. Robert Forby, so well known in this neighbourhood, and especially remembered by his surviving parishioners, a few words will not be without interest. He was a man of letters, strong mind, and brusque manners, "a clergyman of the old school," "sedulously employed in the education of youth, and "an active magistrate." His biographer, the late Dawson Turner, Esq., of Yarmouth, says that "it was "a source of the bitterest anxiety and sorrow to him, "ever to have been placed in the commission of the "peace,"—"an office," he adds, "barely compatible "with the real interests and duties of a clergyman."¹ And when we find Mr. Forby himself, on his return from the sessions, thus describing his own feelings,—his "head full of parish rates, surveyors' accounts, "vagrants, run-away husbands, assaults, petty lar-

¹ "If to these duties he added the task of tuition, and that on so large "a scale as to need an usher, he could not possibly find time for the proper discharge of engagements so obviously incompatible."—Spurden's *Supplement to Forby's Vocabulary*. 1858.

“cenics, militia lists and substitutes, tax duplicates and distress warrants, all jumbled together in horrid confusion,” we may very reasonably agree with Mr. Turner in his opinion.

Mr. Forby was the author of a work entitled *The Vocabulary of East Anglia*, which has not been unacceptable to the public of this county; for he was well qualified for this task, being as an antiquarian not only well read in Anglo-Saxon literature, but “practically conversant with persons of all ranks in rural society.” His book contains some things that are mere vulgarisms, and which did not offend his own ear; but he succeeded in proving that our Norfolk tongue “is genuine English, and not manufactured at home for private use.”¹

He was also author of a public letter to Dr. Bathurst, Bishop of Norwich, in the year 1815, reflecting upon his lordship’s connection with the Church Missionary and Bible Societies. Some parts of this letter are amusing, read in the light of the present day, and perhaps not a little instructive. I cannot forbear from quoting a sentence or two. In reference to public meetings for the diffusion of information on religious subjects, and obtaining support to religious and charitable institutions, he vehemently ridicules the policy and practice of these two societies; and is especially indignant at ladies “taking their seats in the chief places of concourse,” on such occasions. He denominates the whole thing as “a new mendicant system, for gaining contributions from servants, children, and paupers;—for pinching pence from the kitchen and the cottage.” “But, in the name of common sense, can all this last long? The charity that is thus excited is very likely to wax cold. To borrow a medical phrase, the excitability will be worn out. The societies which at present

¹ *Vocabulary*, p. 10.

“find these things answer will assuredly discover that they must *revert to the sober principles of the old school*, and the support of those who quietly and steadily pay their quota of contributions, never wanting these migratory remembrancers to startle their charity from its slumbers, or to melt it into tears!”

Now, having adopted the course recommended by the late venerable Bishop Bathurst, and *all his successors to the present time*, in the face of this pamphlet of my predecessor, and desirous of disabusing as far as possible the minds of my oldest parishioners of any fears or prejudices they may have imbibed, I must be permitted to say that the experience of these two societies has fully justified their proceedings; the “new men-dicant system” has met with an immense amount of public favour and support; the excitability has settled down into a healthy constitutional zeal; and instead of the necessity of reverting to “the sober principles of the old school,” the good old school itself has taken the hint, and, *with the sanction of all the Bishops*, is now most actively engaged in doing the same thing! And why not? It is not only their policy, but their duty; for it is a privilege that belongs to even the poor of the church of Christ,—to “servants, children and “paupers,”—to give of their ability to the treasury of his kingdom. And let our Lord’s words be remembered, that after all, as compared with the wealthy of this world, they may many of them be giving “more than they all.” It is a striking fact, which teaches a serious lesson on this text, that at the present time the Church Missionary Society derives no less than £23,000 of its annual income from “the pence of the kitchen and the cottage.”

Mr. Forby was also the author of two or three other pamphlets and sermons, published at different times, but which we have not space to notice.

Our learned author employed his leisure time much in the delightful and recreative pursuit of botany, in which he excelled. Fincham itself, being highly cultivated agriculturally, has become but a barren field for the botanist. Shouldham common and fen, however, are close at hand, and this, in the preface to the *Vocabulary*, is called an "exquisite spot." The rectory garden to this day gives evidence of a botanical rather than a floricultural taste, some British plants retaining their hold upon the soil; though for the most part "Mr. Forby's weeds" have been compelled to succumb to more showy though not more worthy occupants of the soil.

The catalogue of British plants perpetuates his name to posterity in the *Salix Forbiana*, a new willow discovered by him in the parish, and previously undescribed. He was a fellow of the Linnæan Society, and the personal friend of Sir James Edward Smith, of Norwich, its President, whose works on this very interesting study will never be otherwise than highly esteemed. Mr. Forby's awfully sudden death, "in the midst of life," caused great consternation and regret amongst his parishioners.

There is a portrait of him in the Norwich Museum, from the library of the late Mr. Turner. On the back of it is this: "My old Tutor, painted about 1800."

CHAPTER IX.

THE PARISH CLERK, &c.

1. This is an office coeval probably with the establishment of the parochial system. It was frequently though not necessarily held by a person in holy orders (*clericus*). In accordance with the 91st Canon the appointment is with the minister of the church, and the clerk must be "of honest conversation, sufficient for his reading and writing, and also for his competent skill in singing, if it may be." In the will of Adam de Fyncham (1337) there is a very interesting and important recognition of this ecclesiastical functionary, thus—"Clerico parochiali sex denarios." This was to the parish clerk of St. Martin's. Then again—"Roberto clerico parochiali sancti Michaelis super-tunicam meam de estate cum capicio," i.e., "to Robert the parish clerk of St. Michael's my summer cloak, with its hood," if our interpretation be correct. A bequest of "six pence," or an "old coat," does not seem to us to betoken very great munificence, but we can scarcely judge of the value of either at such an early period.

In the will of Nicholas Fincham, Clerk, previously mentioned, there is a curious devise and endowment in support of the parish clerk, as follows:—

"I wyll and praye, exhorte and desire, all my feoffees, wych ben enfeoffyd in my messuages, and xxx acres of lond, in Fyncham to my use, that they wyll suffyr myn executors, and the chyrchewardens of Sent Martyn's churche in Fyncham, now being yn the seyd office, and all other chyrchewardens for the tyme being, as long as yt may plesse

" God that the world schall indure, yerly to take the yssues profetts and
 " revenues, upon this condicion folowyng, that ys to sey, that the seyd
 " chirkewardens schall hyer yerly an abyll and a conuenient clerk, to
 " serve and to helpe to do devine servyce in the same chirche of Sent
 " Martyn in Fyncham, and to pley at the organis, and to teche chyldern,
 " wherby that God's servyce may be the best maynteyned and susteyned ;
 " and they to give hym a marke yerly of the seyd yssues and profytts, to
 " be payd at iiij termes yn the yer, that ys to sey, at every quarter xl^d,
 " and that the seyde marke schall be no parcell of hys hyer that he takyth
 " of the paryshe &c. ; and yf yt happen ony curat¹ for non cunyng of song
 " [unskilfulness in chanting] to wythdrawe the kepyng of devine servyce
 " by note, or by ony othyr evyll occasyon, so that the devine servyce of
 " God ys not mayntenyd or sustenyd, but by the seyd curat mynyshyd
 " and hurt &c., then the said mark to be given to the poor yearly on
 " Good Friday."

It is to be regretted that this endowment is lost, experiencing the fate of thousands of parish charities, which the religion and liberality of former times had provided for the church and for the poor. The clerk is now paid by a small fixed salary from the parishioners, and by certain fees, a table of which in conjunction with those of the minister is suspended in the Vestry.

2. There is a curious item of expenditure in the old church books of the last century, already quoted, which invites attention here, viz. :—

	s.	d.
" 1731. Apr. 5. Paid the dog-whipper	05	00 "
" " Dec. 26. Thomas Copsey, for dog whipping	05	00 "

This important official must have been identical with the **SEXTON**. A friend informs me that he has not

¹ Curate—minister, whether beneficed or not.—See *Prayer for the Clergy and People*.

unfrequently met with payments to the dog-whipper in old church account books, and that his office was to "whip dogs out of church during the time of divine service; and to this was frequently added the duty "of keeping people awake during sermon time." Hence one can understand how the spirit of Wesley was stirred up in those days. Would that all his followers were like him, and caused divisions only where real occasion seemed to justify them.

In the 9th vol. of *Notes and Queries*, p. 499, some instances of endowments of this office are mentioned. At Chislet, in Kent, there is a piece of land called "Dog-whipper's Marsh," about two acres, out of which ten shillings a year is paid to a person for keeping order in church. At York the feast of St. Luke is by some called *whip-dog day*, some hungry cur in the times of Popery having intruded so far as to the high altar, and devoured a portion of the provided elements. Hence, it is said, a persecution of the canine race there is annually revived on St. Luke's day!

CHAPTER X.

PARISH REGISTERS AND TERRIERS.

1. The first injunctions to the clergy respecting Parish Registers were issued in the 28th of Henry VIII, anno 1538. But only about 800 were commenced so early, a general dislike and suspicion of their object being entertained. Edward VI repeated the same injunctions. Queen Elizabeth appointed ecclesiastical visitors to enforce attention to the subject, and the 70th Canon orders them especially to be made up from the beginning of the reign of the said Queen ; consequently we find a more regular system of registration commencing in most parishes about the year 1558. The Registers of Fincham are the earliest and most complete of any parish in the Deanery. They date from 1541. There are five books previous to the general registration Act of 1812, all of parchment, and six since that time, of paper. Their contents to the end of 1861 are as follows :—

Marriages.	Baptisms.	Burials.
1169	4515	3942

The marriages being about one-fourth, and the burials three-fourths, of the baptisms.

The following table shews the number of books of each church in the Deanery,¹ and the date of the earliest entry in the same :—

¹ Annexed to the *Parliamentary Population Returns* of 1831, which may be found in most public libraries, is a particular account and report of all the parish registers and their contents. On comparing these returns with my own official inspection, I find that Shouldham Thorpe, Wereham, and Ryston have each recovered their oldest book since that date. It is evident still that about 12 other parishes have lost some of their books.

Order.	Parish, or Church.	Books.	Year.
1.	Fincham	11 ...	1541
2.	Beecham-Well	9 ...	1558
3.	Bexwell	9 ...	1558
4.	Dereham, West	10 ...	1558
5.	Shouldham Thorpe	8 ...	1558
6.	Wereham	10 ...	1558
7.	Outwell	10 ...	1559
8.	Stow Bardolf	12 ...	1559
9.	Stradsett	10 ...	1559
10.	Crimplesham	9 ...	1560
11.	Downham	17 ...	1560
12.	Wormegay	12 ...	1561
13.	Holme with South Runcton...	} 11 ...	1562
14.	South Runcton with Holme...		
15.	Marham	9 ...	1562
16.	Wimbotsham	10 ...	1562
17.	Watlington	8 ...	1570
18.	Fordham	7 ...	1572
19.	Hilgay, All Saints	17 ...	1583
20.	Welney	12 ...	1642
21.	Denver	10 ..	1653
22.	Shouldham	10 ..	1653
23.	Tottenham	11 ...	1679
24.	Upwell ¹	18 ...	1683
25.	Ryston	6 ...	1687
26.	Wretton	8 ...	1693
27.	Barton, St. Andrew	8 ...	1695
28.	Southery	8 ..	1706
29.	Barton, St. Mary	8 ...	1726
30.	Boughton	8 ...	1729
31.	Stoke Ferry	8 ...	1736
32.	Shingham	6 ...	1762
33.	Hilgay, St. Mark's ²	2 ...	1852

¹ There are the remains of an older book at Upwell, but so blackened and disfigured by fire, that it is without much interest, and almost useless.

² Hilgay St. Mark's was only constituted a chapel of ease in 1852, and it registers only baptisms and burials.

Proper books, however, for registration were not in use until after the publication of the Canons in 1603, when it was ordered that "in every parish church shall be provided one parchment book, wherein shall be written the day and year of every christening, wedding, and burial, which have been in that parish since the time that the law was first made in that behalf." Hence also it is explained how the earlier books are only transcripts and copies of older papers. This is well illustrated by a memorandum on the cover of our oldest book, shewing that the book itself is not so old by 65 years as the date of its first entry, in 1541.

" the 6 of Auguste 1606,

" payde for xii skynnes of parchement for this booke,

" to one mr. petersonne of Norwich skynner vi^s. viii^d.

" and for byndynge the booke and cover xii^d.

" Thomas Druery."

2. The following are some further extracts from the Fincham Registers, with a few explanatory remarks added :—

A.D.

1542. " Item : the xiith day October was buried John ffyncham the
" son of John Esq."

" It : the xxii of January was buried Mrs. Eyle (Ela) ffincham¹
" the wife of John."

" It : the last day of Februarie was buried Mrs. Elle (Ela)
" ffincham¹ the younger daughter unto Mrs. Eyle."

The prefix " Mrs." was " the proper title of un-

¹ These deaths really occurred in 1540-1, as I have proved in the history of the family. It shews how very cautiously we should receive the testimony of these early memoranda, which were not put into books till many years afterwards. John Fincham, also, in the preceding entry, died before his father, which was in 1540.

“ married women of genteel condition until within
“ little more than a century ago.”—See Forby’s
Vocab., vol. ii, p. 217.

1542. “ It: the viiith ——— was buryed Thomas Lovell,² Knight, at
“ Barton.”

All the above entries belong to the same year, which extended to March 25th, when the civil and legal year commenced. This was altered by Act of Parliament in 1752, and the old style ceased at the same time, September 2nd being called September 14th.

1551. “ It: the xix of July was buryed Thomas ffyncham Esq.”

He was son and heir of John and Ela Fyncham.
—See his *Will*, &c.

“ It: the iiij of July was christened An ffincham the daughter of
“ Thomas.”

She married Charles Cornwallis, Esq., who purchased the Fincham estate of her brother William in 1572, and the old family left the village.—See the *Pedigree*.

1562. “ It: the xxi ——— was buryed Sir Roger Walker, preste.”

1576. “ It: the xvi of October was christened Charles Cornwallis, the
“ sone of Edward Cornwaleis and Ann his wife.”

This family now possessed the Fincham estate, and resided here. But Edward is here written by mistake for Charles.—See next two extracts.

1584. “ Imprimis the xxviii of Aprill were maryed Edward Cornwalles
Gent, and Elizabeth his wife.”

² Lovell was a very ancient family name at Barton. Sir Thomas Lovell and his heirs were Lords there from the time of Henry II.—See Bl., vol. vii, in *Barton*.

- „ “It : the xxix of July was buried Mrs. Ann Cornwalles the wife
“ of Charles Cornwalles Esquier.”
1599. “William Pyke being slayne at the muster at Narborough was
“ buried Aug. 4th.”
- „ “A child of Hickee being perished in a well was buried.”
1600. “June 11th a boy of Mr. Gunson's (Rector) being slayne with a
“ cart was buried.”
1615. “Bridget fincham the daughter of John fincham gent was bapt^d
“ xxvi of September.”
1616. “Bridget fincham filia Johannis et Christianæ¹ bur. July xix.”
1644. “Mildred Cobbe the wife of Henry Cobbe was buried the 16th
“ of May anno predicto.”

I notice this to introduce an extract from the Court Rolls of the Manor, relating to her husband: “1644. felo de se. the presentment of
“ the jury is that Henry Cobb, a free tenant of
“ this manor, since the last court, not having the
“ fear of God before his eyes, but instigated by
“ a diabolical temptation, hanged himself at
“ Fincham.”

1654. “A child left in ower town and died December sixt.”
- „ “Thomas Garrett of London Esq. and Mrs. Ann Drury of
“ Fincham were marryed the 30th March, upon the Thursday,
“ by Sir Ralf Hare, Bart. Nathl. Drury, Regr.”

This is one of those marriages which were *solemnized* before a magistrate and the parish registrar, during the disorderly times of the Commonwealth. There are several similar entries in the Stow and other registers of the Deanery. At Watlington there are fifteen, with this note prefixed to them :

“ Hic finiunt nuptiæ per ministrum
“ Hic incipiunt nuptiæ per magistratum } solemnizandæ.

¹ A branch of the family from Outwell.

An Act of Parliament was afterwards passed, to entitle persons so married to such legal rights as attended marriages duly solemnized.

1661. "July 7th, gathered on a brief for ye distressed inhabitants of
"Scarboro in ye county of York, for the rebuilding of St. Marys
"church the sum of seven shillings and nine pence."

There were ten other similar collections this year. Church briefs were abolished in 1829.

1696. Six persons of one family named Sutton were buried in five months, having died probably from small pox, that disease being previously mentioned.
1746. "M^m: all those with this mark X before them dyed of the
"small pox [about 12] when upwards of 90 had it in the town,
"as witness my hand. W. Harvey."

This loathsome disease was very prevalent at this time, and was increased and propagated by the practice of inoculation. Some of the parishioners still hold to the old sentiments of their forefathers very pertinaciously on this subject, and it is probable that a hundred years will intervene between the discovery of vaccination and its universal adoption, with legislative sanction on its side, and a £10 penalty against a contrary practice.

1754. This year there were many deaths from small pox, and amongst its victims was "*Lebèurfeverèlla*" daughter of Thomas and *Lebèurfeverèlla* Lock," a very outlandish name truly, of the origin of which I am ignorant.
1788. This year small pox had gained such an alarming ascendancy that a vestry was summoned,

whose collective wisdom resolved that no one in the parish should escape. "It was agreed unanimously to inoculate the poor inhabitants of this parish at the public expense," and Mr. Bayfield was forthwith employed, and his bill was £14 14s., for spreading a filthy disease and plague in the village.

1802. The same thing was done again this year, and the sum of £21 15s. 6d. paid for like results, with many deaths. Let the striking contrast presented by our own times have its proper influence in the cause of health and medical science. Inoculation is *illegal*, and vaccination *compulsory*, effected by the overwhelming evidence in favor of Jenner's great discovery in 1770,¹ and fatal cases of small pox are comparatively rare. Just eight years more will complete the centenary of experimental vaccination, and we trust that by that time we may be permitted to see, in God's Providence, its complete triumph.

One more extract from the Registers shall complete the series :—

1856. " March 16th, these three infants, baptized on the same day, and
 " all under six months old, are the son, the grandson, and great
 " grandson of one man, and the great grandson is the oldest of
 " the three ! "

¹ It was in the year 1770 that Dr. Jenner first discovered the art and value of vaccination, and communicated the same to Dr. Hunter. Twenty-six years, however, elapsed before he made an experiment upon a human subject, which he first did upon a boy named Phillips. The boy went favourably through the disease. This was in 1796. He was six weeks afterwards inoculated with small pox, which had no effect upon him as anticipated. The feelings of Jenner on this occasion are thus described by himself: " While the vaccine discovery was progressing, the joy I felt at being the instrument destined to take away from the world one of the greatest calamities, was often so excessive, that on pursuing my favourite object I have found myself in a reverie. It is pleasant to recollect that those reflections always ended in devout acknowledgments to that Being from whom this and all other blessings flow."—Taken from *A Lecture* given at St. George's Hospital in 1856, by Dr. Lee.

3. The Parish Registers are the only sources from which can be gained materials for illustrating the family history or local ancestry of the "rude fore-fathers of the hamlet," except perhaps the "clodger" (Anglo-Saxon) of the family Bible. Uninterrupted residence of any family from an early period possesses a certain degree of interest. We have one such instance running through the whole course of our Registers from their beginning. In 1542, "Ela the daughter of William Compling was buried." Eleven successive generations of this family supply 97 baptisms, 25 marriages, and 60 burials. For 200 years their position was that of the independent yeoman and farmer, holding the various parish offices from time to time. But whether through misfortune, or their own fault, some how or other, they have lost the paternal acres. The present generation are all families of labourers. Let us hope they may possess those better things which do not "make themselves wings and fly away."

Subjoined are extracts from the Will of the above-named William Compling, illustrating the form and fashion of such documents at that day :

"I gyve and bequeathe to the Vicare of Sainte Martens Chirche in Fyncham, for tythes and offerings negligentlie forgotten xii^d item to every one of my god-children being alive at my departynge xii^d apiece. item to Jane my wife my mille and two horses and her cheise. item to the poor people within the towne of Fyncham vi^s viii^d, to be distributed and payde where most nede is, within iiiij years, that is xx^d a yeaere. to the reparation of the high waie fyve shillings, that is for to bye callow¹ and laie it by the dykes between beldames bridge and the crosse, to be bestowed the next somer *after my departynge*.² The

¹ "Callow" is the loose alluvial soil or gravel which lies over any solid stratum of chalk or limestone, &c., and which must be removed to reach them. The same is more commonly called in this county "uncallow," and its removal "uncallowing."—See Forby's *Vocab.*, in voca.

² This touching expression of St. Paul (Acts xx, 29,) I have not met with in any other will.

"residue to myn executors Jane my wife and Richard my sone, these
"being witness Roger Watson and John Mildenhall." Proved March
16th, 1560. Reg. Archd. Norf.

4. **TERRIERS** are so called from the French *terrier*, and that from the Latin *terra*. They are an inventory of the Glebe *lands*, and other temporalities of the Church, made under the provision of the 87th Canon. Their proper place of custody is at the Bishop's or Archdeacon's Registry, and a copy ought to be kept in the parish chest.

There are now extant in the Registry of the Bishop, at Norwich, about 25 Terriers of this parish. The date of the earliest is 1678, written on paper. The next is for the year 1706, also of paper. The others up to a recent date are all of parchment. Down to the year 1747 there is a Terrier for each church, afterwards but one for the consolidated benefice. Their contents are quoted in other parts of this book, and I shall only notice here some incidental entries respecting the number of communicants in connexion with the church, first stating that in 1603, as appears by certified returns from the clergy to King James, Roger Gunson being then Rector and Vicar, &c., there were 253 in the two churches here. "No Popish Recusants, nor "Protestant Dissenters."

In the year 1709 there were 209 communicants.

"	1723	"	170	"
"	1740	"	130	"

Comparing these numbers with the communicants of the present time, we are led to enquire how has come this gradual falling away? Some say that the returns to King James included all who were of age to

communicate, so constituting a kind of census of the adult population. But the truth lies probably in the circumstance that in the Romish church all persons not absolutely *excommunicated* were held to be *in* communion. The nearer therefore we approach the times when that church was dominant in this country, the more nominal communicants we shall find; for at the Reformation, when the great bulk of the people came out from her, they brought with them much of their habits of religious worship, and continued the profession at least of an outward communion. And as in most places in the country so here, the whole population *protested*. There were "no Popish Recusants."

But with regard to the subsequently diminishing number of communicants, the reformed religion in the Church of England, abhorring indiscriminate communion, warns the wicked to repent, and change their lives, or else "not to come to that holy table." And so by degrees many ceased to do so, until these proportions appear but as "a little flock," in vital and personal communion with Christ, compared with the world around them.

CHAPTER XI.

PAROCHIAL CHARITIES.

The parochial charities of Fincham have suffered from neglect and the lapse of time. Some of them probably have become amalgamated with others, and some are quite lost, as that of Nicholas Fyncham, left for the use of the parish clerk, "so long as the world "should indure." Those that are now effective are as follows :—

1. First there are the church lands, consisting of 9a. 1r. Op., originally lying in fourteen separate pieces in the open fields, and in 1747 let for forty shillings per annum, but now inclosed and laid together, and producing a rent of £18 18s.—See Terriers 1709, 1747.

2. "There is also belonging to the said church one litel house, with "yard, containing one rood, and abutting north on the common street, in "the occupation of two poor widows, at the yearly rent of thirty-four "shillings."—Terrier 1747.

This house was taken down and rebuilt in 1806, and now produces £4 per annum. The trustees of these two charities are the minister and churchwardens, and their right appropriation is to the "repairs of the "church," for which they ought to be "reserved "solely."—See the *Report of the Charity Commissioners*, 1834.

3. "On the same rood of land is lately built a neat Town House for the poor, partly by money arising from the sale of the old church materials, and partly with £23 given to the poor by some unknown donor."—Terrier 1747.

Of the rents issuing from this property, £4 17s. is paid to the poor's rate account, and £1 3s., the interest of the said £23, is distributed to poor widows belonging to Fincham annually in January.

4. "There is also belonging to the said town the yearly sum of 9s. 4d., payable out of the estate of Mr. Thomas Bodham, as a rent for a piece of pasture land belonging to the town, lying in his inclosures near the vicarage closes, for the use of the poor."—Terrier 1760.

This land lies in what is now called the "seven acres," and in the survey of 1636, if I am not mistaken, (for its boundaries are now lost,) it is thus described:—

"Ric. Cob, a litle narrow croft adjoining more east, 0a. 3r. 10p."

and has been left to the poor since that time. This charity is distributed with the last mentioned, and the trustees of both are the minister and parish officers.

5. The Poor's Farm consists of 54 acres, an equivalent for their common rights. It produces about £70 per annum, and is distributed in November in coals to the resident poor belonging to Fincham. The trustees are the lords of certain manors, and the rector and churchwardens for the time being.

6. With regard to *educational* charities, there are evidences of some kind of instruction having been given to the poor from very early times. In the survey of 1575 occurs this :

"Quarantena cxxv. Villatica tenet oriente domum vocatum a schole house. Ecclesia sancti Martini est oriente ibidem."

The same occurs in the survey of 1636 :

“ The towne hath a litle house and curtillage, at the south west corner
“ of the churche yard, having formerlie been part of the tenement fol-
“ lowing, and now used for a *school house*, Oa. Or. 6p.”

After this the school was transferred to a room over the Vestry, where it was held within the memory of parishioners now living. The master was appointed, according to the Canon relating thereto, by the Bishop, and in the Bishop's Registry there is a record of two licenses to masters of this school, viz. :

“ 1771. December 26th, William England.”

“ 1784. June 19th, John Tibbenham.”

The parish books contain a “good intention” in this direction, but without any corresponding action.

“ 1810. Resolved to erect a new house on the parish land for a school-
“ master.”

In 1848, however, under the authority of the School Sites Acts, glebe land was conveyed, and a National School erected, for the poor of the parish, subject to Government inspection. The old vicarage barn and premises provided a small endowment in addition. These were sold in 1856, being in a very dilapidated state, and the proceeds invested in the Three-per-cent. Consols, being £162 16s. 6d. stock, now standing in the names of the official trustees of charitable funds. The dividends, amounting to £4 17s. 7d., are paid in July annually to the trustees of the school.—See *Deed of Conveyance*, in the parish chest.

Various gifts and benefactions by will, not being permanent endowments, have at different times been

left to the poor. The Fincham family were foremost amongst these donors. Others since their time have done likewise. As a specimen the following memorandum may be quoted from one of the Registers :—

“ Thomas Taylor of Runcton made his will the 22 of Maye, An. Dom. 1621, and gave unto the towne of Fincham the sume of tenn pounds, to be payde unto the church-wardens for the tyme then being to the use of the poore, by Henry Doleman his executor.”

He also left a like sum to nine other parishes in this Deanery, “receiving everie of them tenn pounds.”—*Fincham Register* No. 2.



ROMAN AMPULLA,
or Vase of Silver.

FOUND AT FINCHAM,
September, 1801.



J.E.B. del^t.

R.S. Green, Wilkinson & Co. Litho.

CHAPTER XII.

ANTIQUITIES, &c.

1. The known antiquities of our village are not many. There is one, however, of especial interest and value, now in the possession of the Rev. R. Hankinson, rector of Walpole St. Andrew. It is a silver Roman ampulla, or bottle-shaped vessel, in good condition, containing seven small silver coins or tokens, of the reigns of the Emperors Valentinian (who held a military command in Britain A.D., 360,) and Arcadius and Honorius (who divided the Roman Empire between them A.D. 395, Britain with Gaul falling to the latter). It is therefore about fourteen centuries and a half old at least. Its weight is 8 oz. and its height 8 inches. It was found behind the plough by a labourer at Fincham, in September, 1801, and taken to Lynn, and sold as old metal to a silversmith, of whom Mr. Hankinson bought it. This interesting relic would worthily occupy a conspicuous place in any museum.

A valuable gold coin was discovered at the roots of one of the large elm trees blown down at the rectory by the very severe gale of February 28th, 1860, which is worthy of especial notice. It has been compared with those of its class in the British Museum, and pronounced to be of the time of Julius Cæsar, and probably coined in France. Its weight is nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. The obverse side is blank. A skeleton-like figure of a horse occupies the reverse. It remains in my own possession.

Many ancient copper coins and tokens, of various

reigns, from the times of the Roman Emperors downwards, have been found in the parish, but I have not leisure sufficient to enquire into their history.

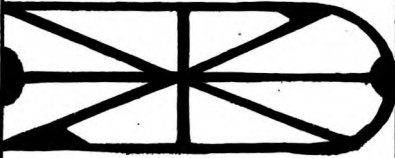
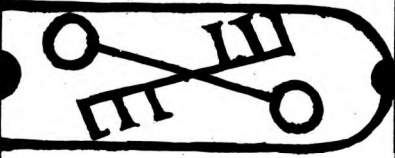


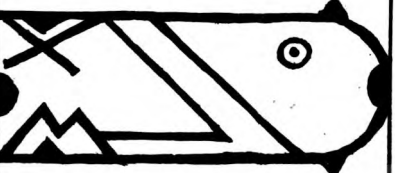
2. FINCHAM SWAN MARKS.

In days of yore our forefathers were accustomed to serve up at their feasts various birds, which at the present day do not occur in our bills of goodly fare. However unpalatable we should probably esteem them now, the Crane, the Heron, the Peacock, and the Swan, anciently graced the tables of the great. At the feast made on the inthronization of George Nevil, Archbishop of York and Chancellor of England, in the sixth year of King Edward IV., no less than 400 swans are numbered among the provisions for the same. On such special occasions the Peacock, and also the Swan, Crane, and other large birds, were served in all their plumage.

In the account of the provisions expended at the installation of Ralph Bourne, Abbot of Canterbury, which took place in the second year of King Edward II, A.D. 1309, are set down 24 Swans, price £7, or 6s 10d each. This is on the authority of Warner's "*Antiquitates Culinariæ*," professing to quote "Thorn;" it must, however, be observed that Dugdale, also quoting the "*Chronicle of William Thorne*," has it "*De Cignis xxxiiij. precium vij^{li}. prec. unius iiij^s. i^d. q. q.*" which is probably the correct account.

The ordinances and laws regarding swans were very strict, and there were regular sessions* of swans; and actions in the case of any trespass were to be brought "afore the King's Justices of his sessions of swans, "upon pain to forfeit to the King's Grace 13s 4d." For



1.	Ed: Fynsham.	
2.	<i>Now Warners</i> Fynsham.	
3.	Ro: Fynsham: now	
	Jo: Thurston: 2: ticks Nere side & one gap	
4.	Jo: Finchams: Junr.	
5.	Idem:	

Swan Marks of the Family of Fincham.

stealing or taking of swan's eggs, the punishment (in 11th Henry VII) was imprisonment for a year and a day, with a fine at the King's will. Cowel states that "it was a custom in ancient time that he who stole a swan in an open and common river, lawfully marked, the same swan, (if it may be), or another swan, shall be hanged in a house by the beak, and he which stole it, in recompense thereof, compelled to give the owner as much corn as may cover all the swan."

Swans being birds of stray and kept on open rivers, it was especially necessary that the several owners should each have his peculiar mark; these marks were made on the upper mandible of the beak, and in some instances on the leg, and were registered in a roll or book by the King's swan-herd.

There is in the possession of A. H. Swatman, Esq., a MS. entitled "The laws, orders, and customs for swans, taken forth of A Booke which ye Lord Buckhurst deliver'd to Edward Clarke of Lyncoln's Inn to revise: Anno Elizabethæ¹ 26^o," (1584); and it appears, from the names entered in the said book, that it appertained to the district watered by the rivers Nar, Ouse,² Nene, Wissey, &c. From it the marks on the accompanying plate, connected with the name of Fincham, are derived.

No. 1. This would appear to be the swan mark of Edward Fincham, son and heir of Robert

¹ This date, 26th Elizabeth, refers, it seems, to the laws, &c., of the Lord Buckhurst's book. The roll itself, although it contains names of persons who flourished at that time, and which might be continued on the roll, has also other names which belong to the succeeding reign. Consequently its date would not be earlier than James, or even Charles I.

² Sir Henry Spelman writes of the Ouse what Ovid had said "de Pergusâ lacu," that the Cäyster itself was not more famous for the songs of swans along its gently flowing waters :—

" non illo plura Cäyster

" Carmina cygnorum labentibus audit in undis."

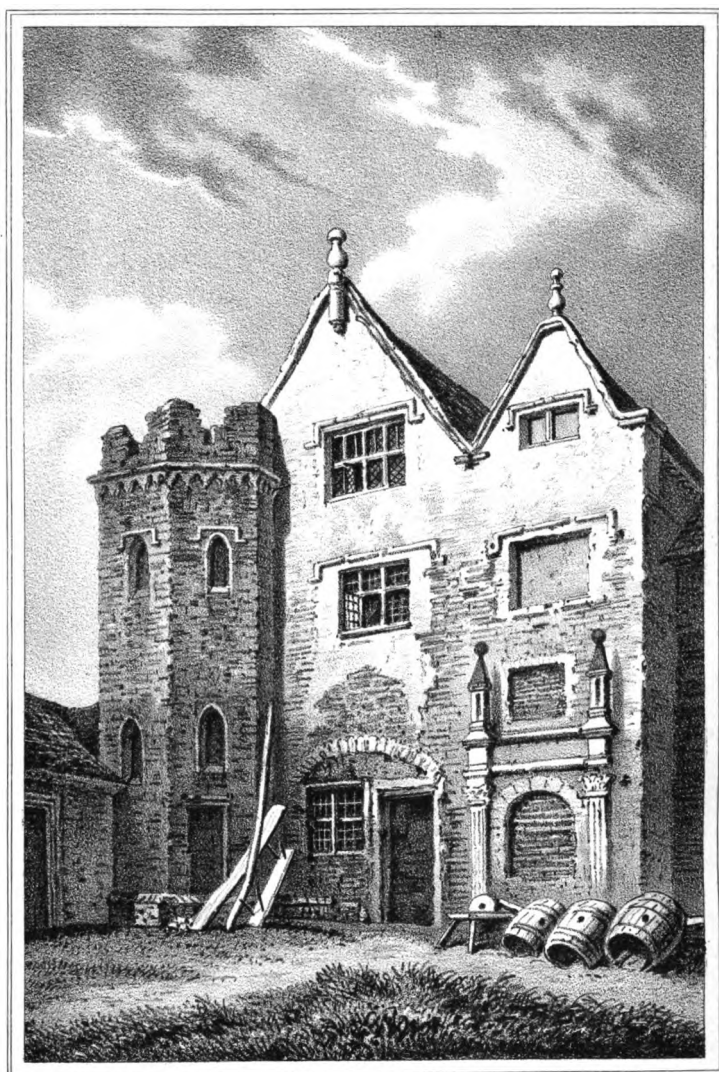
Ovid, Met. v.

Fincham, of Outwell. He lived A.D. 1566—1631.

- No. 2. This has no Christian name affixed. The game with this mark were probably, (the note being written in a later hand), sold to one of the Warner family.
- No. 3. To what Robert Fincham this belonged is uncertain. It could scarcely be the father of Edward, of Outwell. It might have been Robert, his second son, which would accord with the passing of the ownership to John Thurston, who married Catherine, daughter of John Fincham, of the younger branch of the Outwell family, circa 1624.
- No. 4. This would seem to be the mark of John Fincham, son of John Fincham and Christian Whale, and who was distinguished as John *junior*, of Outwell, who was born in 1611.
- No. 5. This belonged to the same John.

Those who remember the old coaching days, before mighty steam caused a complete revolution in travelling, will call to mind the sign of the "Swan with two Necks," in Lad Lane,—a curious bird doubtless, but owing its birth simply to the change of a letter. It would appear that the Royal game, the King's swans, were marked on the beak with two nicks or gaps, and so called swans with two *nicks*, which in process of time was corrupted into the swan with two *necks*. Another mistake has arisen: A special day was fixed when the swanherds were to meet the King's swanherd, for taking up cygnets for marking. This ceremony was called the swan *upping*, which has been transformed into swan *hopping*.





R. S. Green, Wilkinson & Co. Litho. St. Pauls Press.

3415, Queen's Head Passage, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.

North Front of
FINCHAM HALL.
NORFOLK.
 1760.

CHAPTER XIII.

FINCHAM HALL AND THE AYLMER FAMILY.

1. There has existed doubtless from the earliest times after the Norman Invasion a suitable residence for the lord of the principal manor in Fincham. And it was no doubt of a superior character to the houses of the other manors. It would be impossible perhaps now to discover the date of the erection of the first "Fincham Hall," but there exists, however, a very interesting memorial of it, viz., An Inventory¹ of the goods and chattels of John son of Adam de Fyncham, taken A.D. 1340. There are mentioned in this inventory the chapel, the hall, the lord's chamber, the spense or steward's room, the kitchen, the bake-house, and the larder, besides out-houses, and farm buildings. The present mansion cannot possibly have stood from that time. Like the church itself, it is a rebuilding on an old site. It has been considered worthy of a place in *The Beauties of England and Wales*,² and the author of that work says: "It was one of those old baronial houses, which were formerly encompassed with moats, and protected by towers and exceedingly strong doors, &c." It is now the property of Sir Thomas Hare, Baronet, of Stow Bardolph.

The Rev. R. Forby, in a letter to the editor of the work just mentioned, describes the hall as having been built about the reign of Edward IV, who died in 1482. I am inclined to think that a few years later is the correct date of its erection. John Fincham, in his Will,

¹ This Inventory will be found amongst the Fincham Wills in a subsequent chapter.

² *Norfolk*, p. 14.

dated March 10th, 1494, speaks of the chapel of St. Mary as then "being edefied in my maner of " Fyncham," and we know that *manerium* originally signified the *mansion* or *house* of the manor, as well as the manor itself or lordship generally. Mr. F. says that it "exhibits an early specimen of the revived " Grecian style in domestic architecture, especially in " its circular arched entrance, on pillars of the Ionic " order, and bearing some resemblance to the gateway " of Caius College, Cambridge."

The house fronts towards the north, and presents even now an imposing appearance, with its high-pitched gable roofs and window mouldings. It has lost, however, about one-third of its original elevation, viz., the principal apartments on the right-hand of the entrance-hall, with the hexagonal tower on that side. Modern rooms supply in part their place. On the left-hand, however, these features remain, and the tower especially is in good preservation. It consists of a small ground-floor room with a chamber over it, separated by a groined stone roof, on which are the Fincham arms. The engraving shews the house as it was about a hundred years ago, considerably dilapidated. It is taken from *Excursions in Norfolk*, 1818.

As regards the chapel, its exact position in the house is not known. It is alluded to in some of the Fincham Wills. John Fyncham, who died in 1499, leaves the residue of his goods to Jane his wife for certain uses, "except all such ornaments of the *chapel*, which my " father left me by his last will, on condition that the " said ornaments remain in the chapel," &c. Thomas Fyncham likewise, his grandson, who died in 1551, says in his Will: "Item to my son William I give at " his age of twenty-one years all the stuffe and utensils " *in the chamber above the chapell*, the stuffe in the " chamber above the parlour," &c. The word "stuffe," as applied to the furniture of the "best bed room,"

sounds oddly in our ears, but it is thoroughly good old English, as the Bible testifies in Genesis xxxi, 37, and Luke xvii, 31.

Here, then, was the chapel of "our ladie," and

" — the humbler altar, which the knight

" And his retainers of the embattled hall

" Seek in domestic oratory small,

" For prayer in stillness and the chanted rite."—*Wordsworth*.



2. Before taking leave of the old house, the last object of local interest in the parish claiming notice at our hands, it will be convenient to make allusion to the family who for several generations have dwelt securely under its roof, namely, the AYLMEERS, a family as honourable, and even more ancient, than the Finchams. "It is a thing due to worthy men," says Strype, in his life of John Aylmer, Bishop of London, "that their names and good works may never die, nor be forgotten."¹ It ought, then, to be mentioned that they have done more here for their parish church, than any other family since its foundation by the Finchams. The name itself is pure Saxon, and has been variously written *Ælmer*, *Æthelmer*, *Agelmare*, *Ailmer*, &c. It is derived from the Anglo-Saxon "Æl"—*all*, and "Mær"—*great, exalted*. Hence "Ailmer," "a man altogether celebrated."² It was the family name of the Earls of Cornwall in early English history.

Dugdale, in his history of the monasteries, says that one Almerus was appointed the first Abbot of Tavistock, A.D. 981, and in his account of him he has Latinized the name and its derivation, which, though

¹ *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, by the Rev. John Strype.

² The Rev. G. M.

incorrect, as it now seems, I cannot refrain from quoting, for its very simplicity. "An honourable man," says he, "*gentle* and good (*almus* atque bonus), as his name betokens, and as all know who understand the Latin and English tongues, is chosen for the government of the said church, and to feed the Lord's flock assembled therein with the food of his divine word."—Vol. i, p. 997.

I have never seen a pedigree of this family, but I should like to mention a few individual names which have casually presented themselves from various sources.

In the year 1047 *Ailmar* was Bishop of Elmham, prior to the removal of that see to Thetford and Norwich. His name occurs frequently in Domesday, for instance as connected with Gaywood, of which he was Lord.¹ There are, moreover, two entries in this National Record, connected with his name, well worth transcribing as illustrative of Saxon laws and manners. The first, in reference to the law by which a widow could not marry again within twelve months after the death of her husband, occurs under *Plumstead*, in *Blofield* Hundred: "Post quam rex Willielmus venit in hanc terram, invasit Almarus episcopus per forisfacturam, quia mulier quæ tenuit *nupsit intra annum post mortem viri*."² The other is remarkable as a record of the marriage of an ecclesiastic in the church of Rome, no other than the Bishop himself: "Hoc manerium accepit Almarus *cum uxore sua* antequam esset episcopus, et postea tenuit in episcopatu."³ He had also a considerable manor in Sedgeford and Fring.⁴

¹ See Blomesfield in *Gaywood*.

² "After that King William came into this country, Bishop Ailmer took possession [of certain lands] by forfeiture, because the woman who held them *married within the year* after the death of her husband."—Bl., in *Plumstead*. See *The Anglo-Saxon Home*, by J. Thrupp, p. 87.

³ "This manor Ailmer received *with his wife* before he was Bishop, and continued to hold it during his episcopacy."—*Domesday*, vol. ii, fol. 195.

⁴ Bl., in *Sedgeford*.

The following also may be added :—

- 1086. Ailmer, son of Godwin, held lands in Runham.—*Domesday Book*.
- 1260. Roger, son of John Aylmer, purchased lands in *Toimeres*, an ancient and extinct village near Stradsett.¹
- 1317. John, son of Reiner Ailmer de Schouldham.—Deed 10 Edward II, at *Stow*.²
- 1349. John Aylmer, Rector of Waxham and Lesingham, which latter he exchanged for Ingworth in 1353. Rector of Crownthorp in 1355.—*Bl*.
- 1396. Matthew Aylmer, Rector of Stockton.—*Bl*.
- 1402. The same, Rector of Fincham St. Michael's, by exchange.—*Bl*.
- 1426. } Robert Aylmer, Vicar of Eaton, near Norwich ; Rector of Mund-
- 1430. } ham ; and Rector of Carlton.—*Bl*.
- 1481. } Robert Aylmer, Mayor of Norwich, buried in St. Andrew's church
- 1492. } in 1493.—*Bl*.
- 1489. Olive Aylmer, daughter of Robert Aylmer, of Tattington, in Suffolk, Esquire, married Thomas Brampton, Esquire, of Brampton, Norfolk.—*Bl*.
- 1507. Lawrence Aylmer, Lord Mayor of London, unjustly imprisoned by Henry VII.—*Hume*, vol. iii, p. 385.
- 1509. William Aylmer, yeoman of the Crown to Henry VIII.—*State Papers* of said King, No. 572. *Record Office*.
- 1511. Richard Aylmer, Mayor of Norwich, buried in St. Peter's church in 1512.—*Bl*.
- 1513. John Aylmer, Serjeant at Arms, at 12d. per diem.—*State Papers*, Henry VIII, No. 4189.
- 1515. John Aylmer, Rector of Sengham, or Tattersett, All Saints.—*Bl*.
- 1538. George Aylmer, Prior of St. John's of Jerusalem, in London.—*Strype*.
- 1577. John Aylmer, Bishop of London, to 1594. Born at Aylmer Hall, in Tilney, Norfolk, and younger brother to Sir Robert Aylmer.—*Strype's Life of the Bishop*.³

¹ There are still fields in Stradsett called *great and little Tumblers*,—so called from *two meres* that were here ; thus, Two-meres, Toimeres, Tomers, Tumers, and Tumblers.—See old map, &c., of *Stradsett*.

² The seal to this deed is a ridiculous caricature of hunting—a hare mounted on a dog and blowing a horn. The letters of the motto though legible are utterly unintelligible, and are purposely omitted here.

³ “ In the reign of Queen Mary, he fled beyond sea, and was saved by

- 1586. Samuel Aylmer, High Sheriff of Suffolk.—*Ibid.*
- 1621. Sir Gerald Aylmer, created an Irish Baronet.—*Burke.*
- 1669. Jane, daughter of Richard Aylmer, of Birdham, in Sussex, married Jeffrey Le Neve, of Aslacton, Norfolk, Esquire.—*Bl.*
- 1686. Francis Aylmer, Gent., buried in the church of St. George, Tombland, Norwich, aged 58.—*Bl.*
- 1718. Admiral Lord Aylmer, made a peer for naval services.—*History of England.*
- 1718. Thomas Aylmer, Fellow of C.C.C.C., and afterwards Vicar of Lavington, Wilts.—*Lamb's History of the College.*
- 1722. Francis Aylmer, Fellow of the same, and Tutor, and afterwards Rector of Fulmodeston, Norfolk.—*Ibid.*

At the present time considerable estates in Fincham are held by Mr. John Aylmer, and his cousin Mr. George Aylmer. These are principally the sites of the ancient manors of Talbot's and Bainard's Hall, with much of their demesne lands.

The village of Aylmerton, near Cromer, presents in its name collateral evidence of the comparative antiquity in England of the families of Aylmer and Fincham. In the former instance the *Saxon gives name to the town* which he built, or possessed; in the latter the *Norman invades the abode of his predecessor, and takes his name from it.*

The Aylmer Arms are "Argent, a cross sable, between four Cornish choughs of the same." Sometimes there are five *bezants*, or *roundlets*, upon the cross, as in the tower window in Fincham church. They occur in various places in the county, but in the History of Norfolk the birds are variously called *choughs*, *martlets*, and *magpies*, an instance of the defects of that noble work, of which a new edition is so much wanted.—See vols. i, 210; iv, 363; vi, 434.

"the ingenuity of a merchant, who put him into a wine butt, which had a partition in the middle; so that Master Aylmer sat in the hind part thereof, whilst the searchers drunk of the wine which they saw drawn out of the head, or other end thereof."—Fuller's *Worthies*—*Norfolk.*

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FINCHAMS OF FINCHAM.

The value of any statement that pretends to the importance of an historical record depends, of course, like other truth, on its authorities. These in the case of the Fincham family are unusually abundant and good. Very numerous Deeds of sale or gift, &c., marriage settlements, and wills, at Stow; together with Wills, Inquisitions, &c., at the public offices, have yielded a large amount of original and unquestionable evidence for our purpose. Anything herein that is not thus specifically authenticated is taken from the History of Norfolk, or other well known literary publications, Visitations of the Heralds, or genealogical MSS. in the British Museum, or elsewhere.

“It was the custom of the Normans, begun in the days of King Edward, and generally followed after the Conquest, to assume the name of the town or village in which they took their principal manor.”¹

To Fincham came NIGELLUS, but the name being common, it is uncertain whether he was one of those (about twelve) who are so called in the Domesday Record, amongst whom was *Nigellus Medicus*, the King's physician. At any rate the name is not recorded there in connection with Fincham. He might indeed have been sub-ensfeoffed by the first Earl Warren, but more probably by his successor, as the said Earl died at Castle-Acre in 1089, only three years after the completion of the survey. Be this as it may,

¹ *Hist. of Norf.*, vol. ix, p. 246.

it appears certain, from the history of the Priory of Castle-Acre, that in the reign of William II. one "*Nigellus de Fyncham*" gave his tithes to that monastery.¹

From him, it has been assumed, descended the ancient family of Fincham, residing in this village for nearly 500 years, and connected with some of the best families of the county. But early records bearing upon this point are so scanty and obscure, that it is impossible to settle this question with any degree of certainty.

In the construction, therefore, of the Fincham pedigree, all that we can do throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries is to select and connect certain individuals of successive generations styled "*de Fyncham*," according to the dates and internal evidence of the many ancient deeds in which their names are found; not without some misgiving as to their being really in every instance members of the same family. For it must be confessed that there is great difficulty in rightly discriminating and identifying the names of persons in those early times. Surnames were not then general, and although the family holding the chief manor frequently took their name from the place, yet others also are described as the sons of so and so, *of (de)*, or *living in*, the same place, without being at all related to each other. Thus "*Lawrence son of Richard son of John de Fincham*," (*Early Deed*, sans date,) might simply mean that a person named Lawrence, whose father was Richard, and grandfather John, was *of*, or *living in*, Fincham; that they were merely inhabitants of the place, and not that they took their surname from it. This will presently appear from a list of names, taken from numerous Deeds, where all are styled "*de Fyncham*," but most of them certainly were not of the family of Fincham Hall. With these remarks and limitations, applicable to three or four

¹ Dugdale, *Monast. Angl.*, vol. i, p. 626.

generations, we proceed with our account, in the hope that at some future time a further search into the public records will clear the way for a more perfect elucidation of their early history.

I. NIGELLUS DE FYNCHAM was lord of Fincham Hall Manor in the time of William II, and gave his tithes to the Priory of Castle-Acre.—*Bl.*

II. OSBERT DE FYNCHAM, whose exact relationship to Nigellus has not been ascertained, lived in the reign of Henry II, (*Bl.*), and had issue :—

I. REINER, eldest son, who died without issue.—*Bl.*

II. ROBERT, of whom as follows.

III. ROBERT DE FYNCHAM, heir to his brother Reiner, (*Bl.*), had two sons :—

I. JOHN, son and heir, as will appear.

II. RICHARD, "son of Robert."—*Deed, s. d.*¹

IV. JOHN DE FYNCHAM (1) was son and heir to Robert.—*Deed, 34 Edward I.* It will be desirable to designate him *the first*, and so on with others, on account of the extraordinary frequency with which the name of John occurs. He was witness to a deed of grant to the Priory of Castle-Acre. He married Margaret, and had issue :—

I. RICHARD, eldest son and heir, as will appear.

II. JOHN (2), brother² to "Richard, son of John, son of Robert."—*Deed, s. d.*

¹ This deed is given *in extenso* in the Appendix.

² It might have been the wife of this John to whom the following extract refers :—"Richard de Odiham, (Bailiff of the Hundred), put in "prison (imprisonavit) Christian wife of John de Fyncham, and took of "her five shillings for her release."—*Rolls of the Hundred*, temp. Ed. I.

III. LAWRENCE.—*Deed, s. d.*, from Richard to his brother John.

IV. PETER, Clericus, married Matilda—*Deed, 1 Edward II.*¹

V. RICHARD DE FYNCHAM, son and heir to John (1), as by a pleading in the 43 *Henry III.* Also "son of Margaret."—*Deed, 34 Edward I.* His seal consisted of the following legend round a *fleur de lis* in its centre, "S' RICARD' F' IOH'IS."—*Deed, 34 Edward I.*² (See *plate of seals*, No. 3.) He married Agatha and had issue :—

VI. LAURENCE DE FYNCHAM, "son of Richard, son of John."—*Deed, s. d.* His son was

VII. THOMAS DE FYNCHAM, "son of Laurence, son of Agatha."—*Deed, 13 Edward II.* He married Amicia , and was dead before 18 *Edward III.* He had two sons :—

I. WILLIAM, son and heir, of whom presently.

II. ROBERT, who married Isabel—*Deed, 7 Edward II.*

VIII. WILLIAM DE FYNCHAM, "son of Thomas, son of Laurence."—*Deed, 18 Edward III.*

The History of Norfolk next gives *Adam* son of *William and Julian* de Fyncham. If this be so, then there were at least two Adams de Fyncham about this time, and it becomes doubtful whether the foregoing were the ancestors of the Fincham family. For the present, at any rate, this early pedigree must stand alone, wanting authentic connection with that which follows.

¹ This has been discovered since the pedigree was printed.

² There is another deed, sans date, whereby Richard, son of John de Fyncham, grants land to John de Fyncham, the *Chaplain*, but the seal is rather different, viz., "S' RIC' F' IOH'IS," and the writing earlier. This deed also is given *in extenso* in the Appendix.

A PEDIGREE

deduced from the statement in Blomefield's
History of Norfolk, and Deeds at Stow.

Nigellus, Lord of Fyncham temp. R' Will. 2. gave the tithe
of his demesne to the Priory of Castleacre. *Bl.*

Osbert de Fyncham
living temp. Hen. 2. *Bl.*

Reiner de Fyncham,
eldest son, ob. s. p. *Bl.*

Robert de Fyncham
heir to his brother. *Bl.*

Richard de Fyncham
son of Robert, party
to a deed s. d. cir. t.
R' Iohannis.

John de Fyncham,
dead *probably* before
34 Edw. 1, when his
son is styled in a deed
Richard son of Marga-
ret, but the legend on
the seal reads,
s' RICARD' F' IOH'IS.

Margaret,
Deed 34 Edw. 1.

*That these were the ancestors of Adam
de Fyncham, Attornatum Regis, t. Ed. 2
whose posterity bore the surname of Fin-
ham there is not at present any proof; the
Continuator of Blomefield's History con-
sidered them so to have been, but he errs
in making the said Adam to have been the
son of a William de Fyncham and Julian
his wife, Adam son of Thomas & Cecilia
de Fyncham, together with Annabill wife
of Adam, occur in various deeds.*

John de Fyncham.
By deed s. d. Rich.
son of John, son of
Rob. de Fyncham,
conveys a messuage
to his brother John.

Richard de Fyncham son
and heir. *Placita de jur.
et ass'is, Ao. 43 H. 3.*
In 30 Edw. 1. he conveys
lands to Adam the son of
Tho. de Fyncham *Pistor.*
Dead ante 13 Edw. 2.

Agatha. By deed
dat. 13 Edw. 2.
Catherine, relict
of Sir John Cur-
ple Kt., conveys a
messuage &c. to
Thomas son of
Laurence son of
Agatha de Fynch-
ham.

Laurence
mentioned
in a deed
s. d. from
Richard
to his brother John.

Peter de
Fyncham.
*Add. MS.S.
in Brit.
Mus.*

Laurence de Fyncham.
By deed s. d. Laurence son of Ric.
son of John de Fyncham, conveys
lands to Thomas le Pestur.

Thomas de Fyncham, died before
18 Edw. 3. In a deed dat. 13 Ed. 2
he is called son of Laurence, son of
Agatha de Fyncham.

Amicia, styled in 18 Edw. 3.
late the wife of Thomas son
of Laurence de Fyncham.

Robert de Fyncham = Isabel.
*Fines Norf' 6 Edw.
2. Deed 7 Edw. 2.*

William de Fyncham. By deed dated
18 Edw. 3, in which he is called son
of Thomas son of Lawrence, he con-
veys lands, in Fyncham, to John de
Fyncham and Alice his wife.

IX. ADAM DE FYNCHAM, the great man of the family, and perhaps the founder, was the son of THOMAS, "le peateur," or "pistor," the baker, and CICILIA his wife, who were living in 24 *Edward I* (1296). This appears not from any one single deed, but from many, and from a book, in which he caused to be entered the purchase of divers pieces of land in Fyncham and elsewhere. He was born circa 1270, and was Attorney General¹ to Kings Edward II and III.

In some early deeds he is called "Attornatum Regis," and "Clericus Regis," in reference to his office. He had a brother Geoffry living in 1296.—*Deed*, 24 *Edward I*. His wife was Annabill, daughter of David Downe, of Snettisham.—*Inquis. ad quod dam.*, 11 *Edward II*. He died in 1338, and was buried in St. Martin's church, in Fincham, next to his wife; leaving a sister Catherine, and the following issue:—

- I. JOHN (3), son and heir.—*Will* of his father.
- II. RALPH, of Stoke Ferry.—*Ibid*.
- III. WILLIAM, who had a daughter Annabill.—*Ibid*.
- IV. THOMAS, as by *Fine*, 22 *Edward III*.
- V. SIMON.—*Deed*, s. d., and 23 *Edward III*.
- VI. ALICIA, who married probably de Freuze, and had a daughter Alicia.—*Will* of her father.

Contemporaries, if they can be correctly so called, of the name "de Fyncham," at this period are very numerous, and it is impossible to ascertain accurately which of them are related to the family. The following selection of names, however, taken from sundry Deeds,² will be found interesting, if only as marking in

¹ ATTORNEYS GENERAL for England:—

A.D. 1319. Adam de Fyncham, 12 *Edward II*.
 1321. Geoffry le Scrope, 14 *Edward II*.
 1325. Adam de Fyncham, 18 *Edward II*.
 1328. Adam de Fyncham, 2 *Edward III*.

Heydn's *Book of Dignities*, p. 242.

² Many of these Deeds do not measure more than half a square foot, are all in Latin, and in excellent preservation.

some instances the trade or occupation of the individual named; and amongst them are authorities for previous statements concerning the origin of the family.

DEED.

- S. D. Roger¹ son of Walter son of Peter de Fyncham.
 S. D. Richard son of Robert de Fyncham.
 S. D. Andrew son of Roger de Fyncham.
 S. D. Adam son of Hugh de Fyncham.
 S. D. Matthew son of Roger, and Andrew his brother.
 S. D. Walter son of John de Fyncham.
 S. D. Simon *faber* son of William de Fyncham.
 S. D. Adam son of John son of William de Fyncham.
 S. D. Roger son of Stephen to Andrew his son.
 S. D. Henri son of John de Fyncham.
 S. D. Henry son of David de Fyncham *pastoris*.
 S. D. Lawrence son of Richard son of John de Fyncham.
 S. D. Reginald son of Richard de Fyncham.
 S. D. THOMAS *le pesteur* de Fyncham and CECILIA his wife.
 24 Ed. I. THOMAS de Fyncham *pistor* and CECILIA his wife.
 6 Ed. II. ADAM de Fyncham and CECILIA his mother.
 10 Ed. II. ADAM (son of THOMAS *pistoris* de Fyncham) and ANNABIL his wife.
 S. D. John Tristrem to ADAM son of THOMAS *le pestur*.
 S. D. John (4) the *merchant*, son of Ralph de Fyncham.
 S. D. Hugh son of John the *merchant*.
 18 Ed. II. ADAM de Fyncham, Annabil his wife and John their son.
 14 Ed. III. John (5) son of Katherine de Fyncham.

In addition to the above, we have from other sources :

A.D.

1256. HAMON DE FYNCHAM, mentioned in the will of Walter de Suffield, Bishop of Norwich.—*Hist. of Norf.*, vol. iv., *Norwich*.
 1304. JOHN DE FYNCHAM (6), Rector of Caistor.—*Ibid*, in *Caistor*.

¹ When Reginald de Hemington was Bailiff of the Hundred, he took of John son of Roger de Fyncham, one mark, to save his neck, (ne decolleret eum).—*Rotuli Hundredorum 3 Edward I.* The Lord of Clackclose Hundred in those days, he it remembered, had a prison and gallows in his service.—See Bl., in *Clackclose*, vol. vii.



Drawn out from Blomefield's History, and the Visitation of Norfolk, and corrected and enlarged from Wills, Deeds, Court-Rolls, and Registers.

Thomas de Fincham = Cecilia.

Stylish in numerous Deeds
Pistor de Fyncham.

Geoffry de Fincham,
party to a deed together with Tho. &
Cecilia, his father and mother, dated
24 Edw. 1.

Adam de Fincham
King's attorney 12
& 18 Edw. 2.
Will dated 11 E. 3.
died 15 June 1338.

Annabill dr. of David
Downe of Snetesham.
I. ad qd. dam. 11. E. 2.
Bur. in St. Martyn's ch
Fincham

By deed dated at Clerkenwell, 6 Edw. II. Adam de Fyncham appoints *Cecilia* his mother to receive seizen of certain lands.

Katherine Fincham,
mentioned in the Will of Adam,

Thomas
Bloom-
fincham
Fine 22 Edw 3,
if
a Son he is not men
tioned in the Will
of Adam, who does
however mention
John and Thomas,
Simon
de Fincham.
Adam and An-
nailla his wife,
& Simon their
Son, parties to
a Deed s.d. of
land in Stoke-
ferry.

Ralph de Fincham, of Stokeferry, he is mentioned in the Will of Adam.

John de Fincham
living 45 E. 3. dead
before 48 E. 3. when
Simon de la Hay, and
Christiana then his wife,
executed a Deed of Re-
lease of Lands held in
Dower, to John de Fin-
cham, son and h. of her
late husband. He held
his first Court for the
Manor of Burnham Hall
22 Edw. 3.

Alice, daughter
and heir of
Rob. de Causton,
of Fincham.
Living 20 Edw.

**= Christiana
2 wife, dr. of
Richard
Chapps, of
Wolverton.
She mar. 21y
Simon de la
Hay.**

William de =
Fincham,
Will of
Adam.

Alicia, probably married to Frege, as her father's Will mentions Alicia dr. of Alicia de Frege

Edmund Fincham = Christian,
of Watlington. dr. of
Fellbrigg.

Annabill
Will of Adam.

John Fincham
Rector of Rainham. 1449.

Thomas de Fincham =
he had by gift of his
brother the Manor of
Westwinch.

2. William. Robert Fincham = Constance
dr. of
Spilman.

3. Thomas.

4. John. *Harl. MS.* 1531.

Robert Fincham. =

Thomas Fincham = Agnes, 2. dr. of
John Spilman
Bekerton Hall.

John de Fincham,
in 16 R.II. he alienated lands to
the Prior of Ely. Will proved
1415. bur. in St. Martin's Church
in Fincham. To a deed dated 20
Ric. II. is his seal, with 3 birds
circumscribed, 10H. FINE. HAM.

*From the Lynn Corporation
Books it seems there must
have been two Roberts in suc-
cession, as certain Quit-Rents
were paid by a Robt. Fincham,
for near a Century.*

Thomas Fincham, = Margaret Badby.
of North Runcton, living 1540, 1550. Will
dated 26 April, and proved 27th May, 1557.
by which he devises manor, lands, &c., in W.
Winch, Middleton, and N. Runcton, to Robt.
Fincham, with remainders to Wm. Fincham,
and to Richard Fincham of Well. ob. s. p.

Katherine,
dr. of Alicia de Fincham,
Will of Adam,
mar. Laurence
Trussbutt, of
Shouldham. Set-
tlement dated 17 R. 2.

William Fincham, = Margaret = Marion,
of Rougham. Will dated hr. of
7 Aug. 1461. to be bu. in dr. of Simon Barrett,
the Church of St. Mary of Barrett Ringstead,
Rougham. living 1461.

Thomas Edm. Fincham = Grace = Margaret 1. Margaret John
2. son. of Rougham. dr. of .. Margaret a Nun. Fincham,
Will d. 12 Aug. Reade. 2. Elizabeth Rector of
1471. 1. Wife. a nun. Sivekey.

John Fincham Elizabeth Robert = Joan
a Priest. Will dat. 1532. Fincham. dr. of Rob.
bur. in St. James's Ch. Collett.
Norwich.

(A)

The number of individuals called "de Fyncham" may be accounted for by the fact that there were no less than 13 manors or lordships in the village, and any of the lords might be so styled. And hence Sir Samson Talbot, Knight, is sometimes called *Sir Samson de Fyncham*. We have also "Walter son of John de Hoo," called in another deed *Walter de Littlewell in Fincham, son of John the Knight at Hoo*. Martin Godsib also, Rector of North Lynn in 1332, and of Barton St. Andrew's in 1344, is called *Martin de Fyncham*.—See *Bl.* in *North Lynn* and *Barton*.

The WILL of Adam de Fyncham is a document of great interest and value. The original, in Latin, is in the muniment room at Stow, and I can find nothing so old by half a century in any of the Registry offices at Norwich, or the Prerogative Court of Canterbury in London. It is dated, Wednesday next after the feast of the Assumption, in the eleventh year of Edward III. (1337). It will be found, with notes appended, in a subsequent chapter.

X. JOHN DE FYNCHAM (3), son and heir to Adam, succeeded his father in Fincham Hall. He married, first, Alice daughter and heiress of Robert de Cawston and Alice his wife, (*Deed, 20 Edward III.*), by whom he had issue :—

I. JOHN (7), son and heir.—*Heraldic Visitations, &c.*

II. THOMAS, who had, circa 1400, by gift of his brother John, the Manor of West Winch, now called Fincham's in West Winch. He appears to have been the first of the family settled there, and of whom but little is known.¹ There were several descendants of this branch residing in Lynn for a long period, having a mansion house and garden in what was then called *Fincham street*, but now *New Conduit street*.

III. ALICIA, married to Laurence Trusbutt, of Shouldham, Esquire.—*Marr. Sett., 17 Richard II.*

¹ For some account of this branch, as well as of Fincham's Manor in West Winch, compiled by Mr. Swatman, see *Memorials of West Winch*, by the Rev. G. Eller, M.A., Rector. 1861.

John de Fincham married secondly Christiana, daughter of Robert, or Richard, Chappe, or Chapps, of Wolverton. Their son was Edmund Fincham, of Watlington, who was the progenitor of a very respectable branch who lived at Rougham through many generations, and of whom see further in the printed pedigree. He died between the years 1371 and 1374, at which latter date the said Christiana was the wife of Simon de la Hay (*Deed*, 48 *Edward III*). He was buried most probably in St. Martin's church, next to his first wife. I have not discovered any Will; but an Inventory of his goods, already mentioned in the account of the Hall, will be found with the Wills of the family.

Contemporary¹ also with this John we have :—

A.D.

1349. ADAM DE FYNCHAM, chaplain to the Free Chapel of St. Margaret, Hilburgh.—*Bl*.
1349. JOHN DE FYNCHAM (8), Rector of St. George's, Southacre.—*Bl*.
1357. JOHN DE FYNCHAM (9), of Wolverton, merchant.—*Rolls of Parl.*, vol. ii, p. 456.
1366. JOHN DE FYNCHAM, probably the same, Mayor of Lynn.—*Hist. of Lynn*.

XI. JOHN DE FYNCHAM (7) was son and heir to the preceding. He married Katherine daughter of Briston, of Briston, in this county, Esquire, with whom he had divers lands in Stody and Hunworth, with the manor of Harthill in the same. He alienated lands to the Prior of Ely in 1393. His seal was a shield containing three finches circumscribed IOH. FINCE. HAM.—*Deed*, 20 *Richard II*. (See *Plate of Seals*, No. 1.)² His issue by Katherine his wife were :—

¹ Blomefield says that about this time, (40 *Edward III*), William de Fyncham was one of the King's judges; but the judge in question was William de Fyncheden, Knight, of Etwelle, in Derbyshire.—*Dugd. Orig. Jurid*.

² These seals are presented by Mr. Dashwood, from his "*Sigilla Antiqua*."



(A)

Thomas Fincham, brother of Simeon, Deed 7 H. 5.

Guy Fincham, on whom was settled the reversion of divers lands in Hunworth and Stody, the inheritance of Katherine his mother. Deed dated 13 H. 4.

Simeon Fincham, of Fincham, Will dated 31, H. 6., proved 17 Mar. 1456.

Elizabeth, dr. and Coh. of John Tending, of Broc-dish Co. of Norf, Esq., ob. 1464.

Christiana, a Nun at Crabhouse.

Margaret.

Mem. Harl. MS., 1534, gives,
 1. a dr. mar. to Badgercroft.
 2. a dr. mar. John Shouldham.
 3. a dr. mar. Swathing

Nicholas Fincham, Clericus, brother of John son of Simeon. Deed 17 Ed. 4. Will dated 1503, Harl. MS. No. 1534.

William mar. Elizabeth, dr. of fishmonger of London. Will dated 9 Feb. 1490.

Laurence = Elene dr. of citizen and fishmonger of London. Will dated 9 Feb. 1490.

William = Margaret dr. of years of age. Will dated 10 Mar. 1494. & proved 7 Feb. 1496, at d. c.

Ann md. Humphrey Bannister.

Mary md.

Cheney of Sussex.

John Fincham = Beatrice, dr. of Henry Thoresby, of Lyn, Esq., Mar. Sett, dat. 24 H. 6. Buried in St. Martyn's Ch.

Alice Fincham, mar. John Bachcroft, Esq.

Eleanor Fincham, apprenticed to Wm. Rothley, of London, Goldsmith, and Anne his wife, Silk Throwester. The deed of Apprenticeship, is dated 25 H. 6.

md. Elwin.

Harl. MS.S., 1534.

*Wm. Pembridge and others
 enfeoff Simeon Fincham &
 Nicholas Fincham clerk, in
 the Manor of Neleshalle,
 by Deed dated 6 Edw. IV.*

- I. SIMON, son and heir.—*His father's Testament.*
- II. GUY, who inherited his mother's manors in Hunworth and Stody.—*Deed, 13 Henry IV.*
- III. THOMAS, "brother to Simon."—*Deed, 7 Henry V.*
- IV. CHRISTIANA, a nun at Crabhouse,¹ in Wiggenhall St. Mary Magdalen.
- V. MARGARET, married probably to Swarthing.—*Harl. MS., 1534.*
- VI. A daughter, married to John Shouldham.—*Ibid.*
- VII. A daughter, married to Batchcroft.—*Ibid.*

He was buried with his wife in St. Martin's church. He has left two Testaments. The first is dated on Christmas Eve, 13 Henry IV (1411). From this, though "being of no strength at all," I may quote that he gives to the church of St. Martin in Fincham "ten pounds of silver,"² and to the church of St. Michael "forty shillings of silver." His *last* testament is given with the other wills.

Contemporaneous with the above were :—

A.D.

- 1382. JOHN DE FYNCHAM (10), Vicar of Breccles Magna.—*Bl.*
- 1383. HUGH DE FYNCHAM, Canon of the Priory of Wormegay.—*Ibid.*
- 1388. SIMON DE FYNCHAM, Rector of Fransham Magna.—*Ibid.*
- 1400. SIMON DE FYNCHAM, Rector of Gayton Thorpe.—*Ibid.*

XII. SIMON DE FYNCHAM, generally written at this time and afterwards SYMEON, was son and heir to John. His name is among the gentry of the county,³ as returned by the King's Commissioners in the 12th Henry VI (1433). He married Elizabeth, one of the five daughters and coheiresses⁴ of John Tendring, Esquire, of Brockdish, in Norfolk, and had :—

¹ For some account of this nunnery see the *Transactions of the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society*, vol. for 1858, by the Rev. G. H. Dashwood.

² Ten pounds was a very large sum indeed at that time, and it is most probable that the gift was in contemplation of a new church.

³ Fuller's *Worthies*, vol. ii, p. 141.

⁴ *Bl.*, v, 337.

- I. JOHN (11), son and heir.—*Will* of his father.
- II. LAWRENCE, citizen and member of the Fishmongers' Corporation, London. By Elene his wife he had issue one son.—*Will*, in *D. C.*
- III. WILLIAM, whose wife's name was Elizabeth.
- IV. NICHOLAS, in holy orders, who built the Vestry of St. Martin's church, and is buried there. His *Will* is very curious, and has already been quoted. I may here produce another extract. "Item: I wyll that the sayde chyrche-wardens schall fynde v. tapyr of wax in the bason that hangyth afore oure ladye, every tapyr of halfe a pound, unto the sum of v. shillings by the yer, and yerly to bren every dobyll fest ii of the seyde tapyr, and every pryncy-pall fest to bren all v. tapyr."—Dated Oct. 2, 1503, and preserved at *Stow*.
- V. ELEANOR, apprenticed to W. Rothay and Ann his wife, silk throwsters, and married probably Elwyn.—*Deed*, 25 *Henry VI.*
- VI. ALICE, married to John Batchcroft, Esq., of Bexwell.—*Harl. MS.*, 1534.

To Simon de Fyncham we are indebted probably for the fine tower of our church, for which see in the account of the church of St. Martin. He was buried there in 1458, and his wife Elizabeth in 1464. His *Will* and Testament are distinct documents, and are given hereafter. The seal of Simon de Fyncham was elaborate and beautiful, viz., the Fincham arms, with the circumscription SIGILLUM SYMEONIS FYNCH—, and three *finches* separating the words.—See *Plate of Seals*, No. 2.

Among his contemporaries were :—

- A.D.
- 1445. WILLIAM FINCHAM, of Rougham, Esquire.—*Will*, at Norwich.
- 1449. JOHN FINCHAM (12), from Rougham, Rector of Rainham St. Margaret.—Bl., in *Rainham*.
- 1458. JOHN FINCHAM (13), from Rougham, Rector of Stiffkey.—*Ibid.* *Will*, at Norwich.

Fincham Seals.

1.



1. Seal of John Fyncham of Fyncham to a deed confirming to Gregory atte Lathe and Sir Henry Brampton late vicar of Stradesete, a Messuage and Croft in Fyncham. 20. R. II.

2.



2. Seal of Simeon de Fyncham, appended to various deeds. temp. Hen. V. and Hen. VI.

3.



3. Seal of Richard son of John de Fyncham, to a deed whereby he grants to John de Fincham, Chaplain, half an acre of land in Fincham. S. D. temp. Hen. III.

XIII. JOHN FYNCHAM (11), dropping the "de" before the surname, as the Norman-French about this time fell into disuse, was son and heir to Simon, and married Beatrix the daughter of Henry Thoresby, a wealthy merchant at Lynn.—*Marr. Sett.*, 24 *Henry VI* (1446). He was steward for the manors of the Abbot of Ramsey, who was Lord of the Hundred of Clackclose, this Hundred being bounded on the East, in part, by the celebrated earthwork called the *Devil's Dyke*, towards Beacham Well, the origin of which has not been satisfactorily made out. It is in all probability a territorial boundary, and not a military work.¹

Fincham Hall was probably built by this John Fyncham. The remarkable feature of his family was his having two sons of the name of JOHN, living at the same time in man's estate. The residuary clause of his Testament proves this, as well as the Will of his elder son, and a deed by which certain lands are conveyed from one to the other.—*Deed*, 11 *Henry VII*. They are called respectively the *elder* and the *younger* John.² He left issue:—

- I. JOHN (14a), *the elder*, son and heir.—*Will* of his father.
- II. JOHN (14b), *the younger*, of Outwell.—*Will* of his father.
- III. HENRY, married Elizabeth daughter of Stephen Fabian.—*Visita.*, 1619.
- IV. SIMON, Rector of Watlington, and probably of Ringstead parva.—*Bl. Will*, at Norwich, 1512.
- V. THOMAS.—*Will* of *Simon*, his grandfather.
- VI. MARGERIE, a nun at Blackborough, in Middleton, and afterwards Prioress there.—*Deed*, 24 *Henry VII*.

¹ It was certainly considered and used as such by the Abbot, as Sir H. Spelman has stated, "fossa centuriam Clackclose muniens et distermians" "appellatur Bicham ditch, et devenit terminus libertatum Ramesiensis" "*Ecclesiæ*."—*Icenia*, p. 141.

² This and other similar instances are quoted in *Notes and Queries*, vols. viii, ix, x. Also, "Hugh de Gournay is frequently named in "Deeds as H. de G. *Junior*, probably from his having an elder brother "of the same name."—*Record of the House of Gournay*, p. 128.

VII. ELIZABETH, married Kervile, of the Wigganhall family.—*Cole's MSS.*

VIII. ALICE, married Miller, of Kent.—*Harl. MSS.*, 1534.

He died in 1496, and a *Post Mortem Inquisition* was taken 12 *Henry VII* (1497), at *Hingham*. He was buried, together with his wife Beatrix, in St. Martin's church. He is said to have purchased the manor of Burnham Deepdale in 1474.—*Memorials of West Winch*, p. 106. His will is very long, and only about half of it is transcribed, relating to the foundation of a chantry in St. Martin's church.—See the Will.

Contemporary with him were:—

A.D.

1479. "Brother THOMAS FYNCHAM," Canon of Old Buckenham.—*Bl.*

1486. SIMON FYNCHAM, Fellow of C.C.C.C., and Rector of St. Benet's, said to be his younger brother. He died in 1512.—*Lamb's Hist. of Corpus Chr. Coll.*, p. 311.

XIV(a).¹ JOHN FYNCHAM (14a), called *the elder* John, son and heir of the preceding (*P.M.I.*), was 44 years of age at his father's death in 1496. He married, first, Alice daughter of Thomas Bedingfield, Esq., of Oxburgh.—*Marr. Sett.*, *March* 3, 1469. By her it does not appear that he had any children. She lies buried in the parish church of Merton, in this county, near to her sister Mary, the wife of William de Grey, of the Walsingham family. Her epitaph is as follows:—

Hic jacet Alicia quondam uxor Johannis Fyncham filii senioris Johannis Fyncham, que quidem Alicia fuit filia Thome Bedyngfeld Armigeri, et soror Marie Grey, et que quidem Alicia obiit XXX die Maii Anno Domini MCCCCXXXV.² cuius anime propicietur Deus. Amen.

¹ Henceforth the letters (a), (b), (c), &c., placed next to the number of the generation, XIV(a), &c., denote the several branches of the family.

² Misquoted in Blomefield as 1464.

He married, secondly, Jane daughter of John Tey, Esq., of the county of Essex, and Margaret his wife.—*Marr. Sett.*, 22 Edward IV (1482). By this marriage he had issue :—

I. JOHN (15), son and heir.—*Will* of his father.

II. ALICE, wife to Humphrey Kerville, of Wiggenghall St. Mary's.—*Kerville Pedigree*.

III. MARGARET, who married probably William Skipwith, who is called "my brother Skipwith" in the *Will* of her brother John.

He died in 1499, and is buried in St. Martin's church, with Jane his wife, who it appears had married secondly Sir Philip Tilney, Knight, of Suffolk.¹ His Will and Testament are with the others.

Contemporary with him was :—

A.D.

1485. THOMAS FYNCHAM, of Hockwold, Norfolk, and many years Fellow of King's Hall, Cambridge.² In his will, dated January 8th, 1517, he calls himself *cousin* to the above, and to John Fyncham, junr., of Outwell, but we have not been able at present to place him in the pedigree.³ "The arms of Fyncham are engraved five times on the garden wall on the right-hand of the King's gate in Trinity College, Cambridge, that wall being built by Thomas Fyncham, a Fellow of King's Hall, near the seniority in 1485."—*Cole's MSS.*, Br. Mus.

1509. THOMAS FYNCHAM was Rector of Bixton.—*Bl.*

XV(a). JOHN FYNCHAM (15), son and heir to the last-mentioned, married Ela daughter of Gregory

¹ It seems that he resided here occasionally after this marriage. An official document is thus addressed to him: "For Sir Philip Tylney, Knight, of Fyncham, Norfolk, alias Kelsale, Suffolk."—*State Papers*, 6th Henry VIII, No. 5250.

² King's Hall was incorporated with Trinity College by Henry VIII.

³ In the Court Books of Hockwold-cum-Wilton, 23 Henry VII (1507), is this: "John Fyncham, late of Hockwold, deceased." Who was this John Fyncham? He left a will (not yet discovered) in which he mentions a son "Robert," according to said books.

Adgore, or Edgar, of Suffolk, Esquire, Serjeant-at-Arms.—*Marr. Sett.*, Nov. 26, 1519. Their issue was :

- I. JOHN (16), who died young, probably before his father (1540), not being mentioned in his Will. In the pedigree he is called "posthumous," because the parish register has his burial in 1542. But I am convinced that this is incorrect, as it certainly is for the burial of his mother and sister, both set down in the same year.
- II. THOMAS, second son and heir, (*Will* of his father), of whom presently.
- III. ELA, "mayde dowhter to John ffyncham Esquier," according to her own Will, dated February 19th, 32 Henry VIII (1540-1). By this Will she gives "ten shillings to the church of St. Martin's, fyve shillings to St. Michael's, "and fower pence to each of the inhabitants of the towne of Fyncham. Item to my brother Thomas my trussing "bedde¹ with all belonging thereto."—This Will was proved March 8th following (1540-1).—*Norwich*.

He died November 11th, 1540. A *Post Mortem Inquisition* was taken at *Norwich Castle*, September 19th, 1541. His Will is recited in it, and will be found with the other Fincham Wills. He was seized of the manor of Burnham Deepdale, &c. Ela his wife died two months after her husband, January 21st, 1540-1. Her Will is dated the same day, January 21st, 32 Henry VIII (1540-1), and proved the same day with her daughter's.² *P.M.I.* taken at *Ipswich*, October 8th, 1541. She bequeaths to her son Thomas "all my "harnes,³ and weapons mete for the warres. twenty

¹ *Trussing*, from the French "trousser," to pack up close. Few things were oftener specified in early wills than beds. Edward the Black Prince bequeathed several, as did his father Edward III. And John of Gaunt also bequeaths "my other beds called in England *trussing* beds."

² The dates of the wills, their probates, and the deaths of Ela Fincham and Ela her daughter, all occurred within the three months of the double notation of the year 1540-1; and some of them being according to the *civil* and others the *historical* year, the difficulty of making out a true account is apparent.

³ *Harness* formerly meant "accoutrements" in general, whether for man or horse.—See 1 Kings, xx, 11, and xxii, 34.

“ shillings for mending the highways of Fincham.
 “ Item viii pence to every householder in the towne.
 “ Item to my son Thomas iii ringes of golde—my
 “ marieng ringe, my howsband’s signet ringe, and one
 “ with a dymonde and two letters.”—*Consistory Court, Norwich*.

Contemporary with them were:—

A.D.

1532. SIR JOHN FYNCHAM (17), (Rougham branch), parish priest of St. James’s church, Norwich, and buried there.—*Will*, at Norwich.

1540. THOMAS FYNCHAM, of North Runcton (West Winch branch), who died in 1557.—*Will*, in D. C.

XVI(a). THOMAS FYNCHAM, second son and heir to John and Ela, (*P.M.I.*) was a minor of the age of 12 years at his father’s and mother’s death, in 1540-1, and the King’s ward.—*Deed*, 34 *Henry VIII*. He married Martha daughter of William Yelverton, of Rougham, in this county, Esquire, and had issue:—

I. WILLIAM, son and heir.—*Will* of his father.

II. ANN, baptised July 4th, 1551. She married, first, Richard Nicoll, of Islington, Norfolk, Esquire; and secondly, Charles Cornwallis, of Beeston, Norfolk, Esquire. She was his first wife, and was buried at Fincham July 29th, 1584. Sir Charles Cornwallis was H.M. Ambassador at the Court of Madrid, and was knighted May 11th, 1603. He died in 1629, intestate. He appears to have lived here until the death of his wife, having purchased the estate of her brother William. He had a son Charles¹ here, who is not mentioned in the Cornwallis pedigree, having probably died young.

Thomas Fyncham died July 30th, 1551, as appears from a *Post Mortem Inquisition* taken at *Norwich*

¹ *Fincham Register*, anno 1576.

Castle 31st January, 6 Edward VI (1552). He was only 23 years of age, and was buried in St. Martin's church. In his will, which is quoted hereafter, there is this bequest: "To the *common boxe* in Fyncham vi^{li} viii^s iv^d." In all previous bequests of this kind I have never met with this term. I suppose it was the parish purse in the hands of the churchwardens, for in this very year (1551) an Act was passed, I think the first in England, for the relief of the impotent poor. There were no overseers till 50 years later, the 43rd of Elizabeth.

It was this gentleman against whom the Fincham rebels in Kett's time uttered the horrible threat to "make a carte wey between his hed and shulders," if he did not at once join them.—See chap. III.

Martha his widow married, first, William Swanton, of Bury St. Edmund's; and afterwards John Higham, (misprinted Heighton in the pedigree,) of Gifford, Esquire. She was living in 1577.¹

XVII(a). WILLIAM FYNCHAM, son and heir of Thomas, (*P.M.I.*) was a minor aged two years and 45 weeks at his father's death in 1551. His wardship and marriage were granted, February 17th, 1553, to Sir Edward Warner, Knight. The schedule attached to the deed sums up the value of his estates at £94 16s. 9½d. He married Audrey daughter of Sir Thomas Lovell, Knight, of Harling, and relict of — Cooke, of Melton. He sold his Fincham estates to Charles Cornwallis, Esquire, on his coming of age in 1572, and thenceforth this the elder branch of the family began to decline, the ancient hereditaments being gone.² He was "defunct" before 1586.³ I do not find his

¹ "Martha Higham mother to the said Ann and William Fincham."—*Deed of Sale*, March 24th, 1577. In possession of Mrs. Bland.

² His autograph signature is on a *Deed of Sale* in 1572, in possession of Mr. Hebgin.

³ *Old Deed*, in possession of Mr. J. B. Barsham.

(8)

John Fincham,
Not mentioned in the Will
of his father, he would
seem to have been a
posthumous child, to have
died an infant, and been
buried the 12 Oct., 1542.
Fin. Reg.

Thomas Fincham,
a minor at his father's death, and the King's
Ward, who granted to William Sharrington,
Esq., a lease of the manor of Fincham, &c.,
during the minority, by Deed dated 14 July;
34 H. 8 Held his 1st Court for Baynard-hall
Manor, 4 Edw. 6. Will dated 1550. Proved
1551. ob. 30 July, 1551. Bur. at Fincham.
P. M. I., taken at Norwich, 31 Jan., 6 Edw. 6.
ao. 1552.

Martha,
dr. of Will. Yelverton, of Roughtam, Esq.
She mar. 2ly William Swanton, of Bury
St. Edmund's, gent., as appears by a Deed
of Release of Dower, dated 17 Nov., 39
Elizabeth. She mar. subsequently, John
Heighton, of Gifford, Esq.. Camb. Visit.
1619. She was living 1577.

Ela Fincham,
ob. s. p. Will dated
19 Feb., 1541.
Proved 8 Mar., 1541.

William Fincham,
a minor, aged 2 years, and 45 weeks in
31 Jan., 6 Ed. 6. His wardship and
marriage were granted to Sir Edward
Warner, Knt. Living 21 Dec., 14 Eliz.
Dead before 16 Jan. 28 Eliz.—*Deeds*
penes, J. Barsham.

Audrey,
dr. of Sir Thomas Lovell,
of Harling; and relict
of Cooke, of
Melton Constable.
Anne Fincham,
Bp. 4 July, 1551, md. 1573, Sep. 18, to
Richard Nicolls, Esq., at St. Mary's
Wigenhale. She m. 2ly Charles Corn-
wallis, Esq. Bur. at Fincham, 4 July,
1584.

John Fincham, =
Cole's MSS. v. 2,
fo. 12.

.....
dr. of Robert Lovell, of
Beechamwell, 3d son of
Sir Thomas Lovell.
Camb. Visit. 1619.

place of burial, nor any Will. It appears, however, that he left a son,¹ viz. :—

XVIII(a). JOHN FYNCHAM (18), who married a daughter of Robert Lovell, of Beacham Well, but his place of residence is not known. The family had left the village, and the estate had no longer a resident lord.

The name, however, at this time occurs at Stow, and there are about thirty entries in the registers of that village down to 1648. But whether the Finchams of Stow came from Fincham, or Outwell, or West Winch, is not known. Their position appears to have been that of respectable copyhold or freehold tenants; and in the Court Books of Stow occasional mention of the name occurs, as for instance :—

26th Elizth. (1584), William Fincham and Alice his wife surrender and are readmitted to lands, 5 acres, in Newlond, Stow.

40th ibid, (1598), John Fincham (19), gentleman, surrenders a messuage in Downham.

9th James I (1612), Thomas Fincham, son and heir of William Fincham *avi sui* deceased, (*avi* probably for *patris*), admitted to 5 acres and a messuage in Newlond.

There are two or three wills also at Norwich of the Finchams of Stow, which shew their *descent*, in one sense, if not in that for which the search was made. I will quote only one extract. William Fyncham bequeaths to his beloved wife “all my cheese, one goose and gander, and all my cocks and hennes.” Proved A.D. 1610.

¹ *Herald's Visitation*, 1619. *Cole's MSS.*, Br. Mus., vol. ii, p. 12.

CHAPTER XV.

THE FINCHAMS OF OUTWELL.

This very respectable and prolific branch of the family descended from John Fincham, *Junior*, (14b), of Fincham, the younger of the two brothers of the same name, and making the 20th John already noticed. He went to Outwell about the year 1485, having married, or being about to marry, Elizabeth daughter of Thomas Deerham, of Crimplesham, Esquire; and grand-daughter of Gilbert Haultoft, Esquire, of Outwell, a baron of the Exchequer in the reign of Henry VI. With his wife he inherited Lord Bardolph's manor in Outwell, and the manor of Vernon's (also "jure uxoris,") in Elme, which Haultoft had purchased of William de Grey, of Merton, and Christiana his wife, October 2nd, 15 Henry VI (1436).¹

Connected with this inheritance was the chapel of *St. Nicholas*, in the church of *St. Clement's*, in Outwell.² It forms the eastern extremity of the north aisle, and was probably founded by Gilbert Haultoft, who gave lands to find a chantry-priest to say mass in this church. His Will also contains a curiously-expressed instruction for the reparation of the chapel

¹ *Add. MSS.*, Br. Mus., 8839, p. 146.

² There are two other chapels in this church. That on the south side, corresponding with the chapel of *St. Nicholas*, is dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and was the burial place of the Bells of Beauprè Hall. The other, on the north, extending into the churchyard about 18 feet, is called the Lynn chapel, from a Cambridgeshire family of that name. It had the date MCCCCXX in one of its windows in Blomefield's time. It is now used as a vestry. The whole church has during the present year, 1862, undergone very extensive reparations, at an expense of £2000, under the superintendence of the Rev. H. Wright, the Rector.

of St. Christopher, an ancient hermitage in Outwell, in these words: "Item volo quod executores mei faciant "de novo the roofo of Christopher Chapple, et exaltent "muros melius quam nunc est."¹ The chapel of St. Nicholas was beautiful, especially in its windows, which were very rich in stained glass, of which only one mutilated figure now remains. "In the middle of "this chapel to the north," says Cole the antiquarian, who visited it about 1763, "there lies an old grey "marble with a piece of brass, and this inscription:—

*Hic jacet Margareta Haultoft quondam uxor Gilberti
Haultoft unius baronorum saccharii nuper domini Henrici
VI regis Angliæ cuius anime propicietur Deus.*

Mr. Cole then goes on to say: "This Margaret "Haultoft, as I take it, was mother [really the grand-
"mother] to an heiress, who married a Fincham; for
"the Fincham arms quartering Haultoft are in stone
"on the outside of this chapel, and several times
"within, so that a son by this marriage was the
"founder thereof."² This conclusion, which but for
its being also in Blomesfield I should not perhaps have
noticed, must surely be erroneous. The existence of
the brass itself to this day, with its inscription, copied
above, to the memory of the grandmother of John
Fincham's wife, sufficiently indicates that the chapel
was founded by her husband Haultoft, if not before
his time. In confirmation of this I find it stated in
another MS. that the said Gilbert Haultoft "built the
"chapell in the parish church of Outwell, with the
"window adorned with the arms of his family, &c.,
"and was buried there."³ The Fincham arms, &c.,
were doubtless put up at subsequent times, extending

¹ Will dated 10th January, 1457; proved 7th October, 1458.—*Stow.*

² *Cole's MSS.*, Br. Mus., vol. viii, pp. 108-9-10.

³ *Add. MSS.*, Br. Mus., 8839, p. 146.

down to James I, when the family pew was erected, which also was embellished with the same insignia and other devices. The panelling of this pew has been preserved, and is intended to adorn the Lynn chapel, now used as a vestry.

There is also in this chapel of St. Nicholas an old brass effigy, with the following inscription beneath it:—

Here lieth Richard Obwadrng Esquier whiche decessid ye
XXXX day of September the yer of our Lord MCCCCXX
on whos soule Ieshu habe mercy. Amen.

Also,

*Maria daughter of William and Lucy Castell
died 13th Jan : 1801. aged three years.*

Quam Deus amat cito moritur.

To proceed with the family history, now at the fourteenth generation, and the first of Outwell:—

XIV(b). JOHN FINCHAM (20) by Elizabeth his wife had issue two sons, Thomas and Simon, and four daughters. By his Will, proved in D. C. May 26th, 1527, he gives the manor of Deepdale to his wife.¹ He orders "fyve cuppes of silver gilte" to be made, for his nephew John and four daughters. His wife died in the following year, and Deepdale reverted to the Finchams of Fincham. She is buried in the chapel of *St. Nicholas*. From their two sons descended two distinct families at Outwell, which, after

¹ See also *Post Mortem Inquisition* taken at *Bishop's Lynn*, Oct. 29th, 19 Henry VIII (1528).

FINCHAM of OUTWELL.

John Fincham = Elizabeth
 jun. youngest son of John Fincham of Fincham dr. of Thomas Dereham Esq., [by Alice dr. and coh. of Gilbert
 and Beatrice Thoresby, was of Outwell; he had Haltoft 2nd. Baron of the Exchequer, whose Will dat. 10 Jan.
 the Manor of Vernons in Elm jure uxoris. 1457, was proved 7 Oct 1458.] Will dat. 1528. bur. at Outwell.
 Will dat. 18 April, proved 25 May 1527.

Simeon Fincham. = Thomasine
 Will dat. 25 Nov. dr. of J. Felgate
 1538. bur. in the of Ipswich.
 chapel of St. Nich. in Outwell church.

Thomas Fincham =
 of Outwell eldest son
 living 1542.

Joan
 daughter of

 bur. at Outwell
 1572.

Eleanor
 a Nun at
 Chatteris.

Elizabeth
 a Nun at
 Shouldham. Jeynor.

Alice
 m. John
 Holdich of
 Ranworth.

Richard Fincham Anne Fincham
 of Ely, eldest son m. Tho. Steward
 ob. s. p. 1602. of Ely.

Robert Fincham
 of Outwell, held lands in Old-
 field, and Needham, in Elm.

Cecilia dr. of
 Nich. Steward
 of Well, by Ce-
 cilia dr. & heir
 of John Bask-
 erville Esq.
 bur. in Outwell
 Ch. Sep. 1582.

Elizabeth
 died unm.

Eleanor
 m. Richard
 Lee of Her-
 riard co.
 Hants.

Beatrice m.
 1567 Math.
 Hutton Ld.
 Archibishop
 of York. ob.
 5 May 1582.
 bur. in York
 minster.

Thomasine
 m. John Bryan of
 Bolingbrooke co.
 Linc.

*By Indenture 1 Nov. 38 Eliz. from Rich. Fincham & Robert
 his brother, the M.M. of Budberch, and Vernons, with all lands
 tenements &c. in Outwell, Upwell, Elm, and Emneth are settled
 upon Edward Fincham, son and h. app. of Robert with remain-
 ders to Nathaniel his 2nd, Robert his 3rd, and Tho. his 4th son.*

2. Nathaniel
bp. 1571. ob. s. p.

3. Robert
bp. 1576. ob. s. p.

4. Thomas
bp. 1580. ob. s. p.

Edward Fincham =
of Outwell, bp. 1566.
bur. there 1st. June
1631. Will pr. D. C.
1st. July following.

Mary, dr. & heir
of Rich. Sterling of
Dedham co. Essex.
living 23 May 1653.

Grace
m. John Cross.

Joane
m. Thomas Baynes of
Caton Hall, co. Lanc.
By Will he settled all
his lands &c. on his
brother in law Edward
Fincham, after the d.
of Joane his wife. He
had a son Simeon, of
Braughton co. Herts.
who died v. r. 1614.

Robert
bp. 1603.

Ralph
bp. 1614.

James = Margaret
dr. of

Richard = Anne
dr. of William
Downman.

Rachael = Tho. Fincham = Frances
son and heir 19
years of age in
1619. ob. 1666.
In 1656, he was
described as of
Norwich, & late
of Outwell.

Jane bp. 1605. md.
Christopher Gardener.
bp. 1617.

Mary m. Sam. Calverley Cecilia
bp. 1611.

Bridget bap. 1608.
Eliz. d. inf.

Edward
of London
Draper.
w. pr. 1683.

James.
Henry.

Richard
bp. 1653.
ob. inf.

Richard =
bp. 1655.
Will dat.
1680.

Anne
b. 1657.
liv. 1668.

Mary
b. 1660.
ob. 1664.

Jane
b. 1664.
ob. inf.

Myles
b. 1640.

Edward
bp. 1641.
ob. inf.

Robert
b. 1627.
ob. inf.

MARY sole heiress,
b. 1626. m. John Finc-
ham descended from Si-
meon, the brother of her
g. g. grandfather, mar.
sett. dat. 1656, ob. 1658.

Bridget
d. 1639.
ob. 1655.

Martha
b. 1630.

Anne Fincham, only child.
Harl. MS. S. 8844.



exhibiting a very numerous progeny in both branches, were united again by marriage in the 5th generation. I can only mention the heads of each successive generation of the two families. The rest will be found in the regular pedigree printed herewith.¹

XV(b). THOMAS FINCHAM,² the elder son, married Joan, and had issue two sons and five daughters. Richard, his eldest son and heir, died s. p. in 1602.³ The second son was

XVI(b). ROBERT FINCHAM, who held lands in Oldfield and Needham, in Elme. He married Cecilia daughter of Nicholas Steward, by whom he had four sons and seven daughters, of whom his eldest son and heir was

XVII(b). EDWARD FINCHAM, born in 1566. He inherited the Elme estate, and married Jane daughter and heiress of Richard Sterling, of Dedham, in Essex, Esquire. He died in 1631. His Will was proved July 1st of that year, D. C. He had a numerous family of five sons and six daughters. Of these his eldest son and heir was

XVIII(b). THOMAS FINCHAM, born in 1619. He married Frances Richmond, of Haddenham, and, having left Outwell, died at Norwich in 1666. He had sold his Elme property in 1656 to Richard his youngest brother, who was buried in the north aisle of the church of that parish, and the following elegant

¹ The best MS. for this pedigree is Harl., 1534, p. 48. One or two others give Mary Oldham as mother to John Fincham, and other errors.

² He is called Sir Thomas Fincham, Knight, in Burke's *Landed Gentry*.

³ This and many of the dates that follow are derived from the Registers of Outwell parish, which commence in 1559. They contain 59 baptisms, 37 burials and 8 marriages relating to this family.

Latin epitaph, on a brass plate, beneath the Fincham arms, is to his memory :—

Mihi heri, hodie tibi.

Sub hoc marmore depositæ sunt

Exuviæ mortales viri dignissimi,

Ricardi Fincham, qui vitam non

Reliquit, sed mutavit, 24^o die

Novembris, anno salutis nostræ 1667,

Ætatis suæ 50.

<i>Per vitam ad mortem transitus</i>	} <i>est.</i>
<i>Per mortem ad vitam reditus</i>	

The said Thomas Fincham had issue one son, Robert, who died in his infancy, and three daughters, of whom MARY was born in 1626, and, surviving her sisters, was married, as sole heiress, in 1656, to her relative John Fincham, of the Outwell junior branch, (of whom by and bye,) and died in 1658, without male issue.

We revert consequently to the said junior branch, in the second son of John and Elizabeth Fincham, viz. :—

XV(c). SIMON FINCHAM. He married Thomasine daughter of Edward Felgate, (in some documents written Gilgatt,) of Ipswich, Esquire, and died in 1538. His Will was proved November 25th of that year. A *Post Mortem Inquisition* was taken at Downham Market, August 30th, 31 Henry VIII (1539). He had two sons and four daughters. His eldest son, John Fincham (21), aged eight years at his father's death, died s. p. His second son,

XVI(c). SIMON FINCHAM, married Ann daughter of John Balam, of Barton Mills, Esquire. He was buried



John Fincham, eldest Son. ob. s. p. bur. at Outwell.

Simon Fincham, dr. of John Balam, of Barton Mills, Co. Suff. of Bolingbrooke, Co. Linc., gent. 1611.

Grace, d. unm.

Elizabeth d. unm.

Robert, Thomas, Balam, Charles, George, ob. inf. bp. 1567. bp. 1569. bp. 1571. ob. inf.

William, dr. of John Spence & John Dixon. ob. inf.

Mary, dr. of John Spence & John Dixon. ob. inf.

Elizabeth, Mary, Elizabeth, Susanna, bp. 1575. bp. 1577. m. in 1605 William Andrews.

Simon Fincham = Mary of London Dra- per. ob. 1663. He lived at the sign of the Cas- tle, in St. Paul's Ch. yd. *State papers* vol. 153.

Richard ob. inf.

Richard ob. 1597.

Richard ob. 1681.

Mary dr. of Rycroft of co. Devon.

William m. Anthony Grosvenor of London, Mercer in Lombard street.

Catherine, m. 1st. 1615 Tho. Trench, who d. 22 Jac. 1. m. 2. John Thurston of Hoxne co. Suff. released in Dec. 1629. *State papers Vol. 153.*

John Fincham = Christiana dr. of Augustine Whale of Catton co. Norf. living 1635.

Elizabeth Fincham only daughter. *Add. MS. S. 5524.*

Simon Fincham Mary Sarah Hannah
left heir to his m. John m. Robert
uncle Richard. Mills of Haigh of Fincham of
mar. but d. s. p. London. London. Lond., gold-
smith, ob.
Elizabeth s. p.
d. unm.

Augustine Robert Samuel John Fincham = Mary, dr. of
set. 4 yrs. b. 1637. ob. inf. years in 1619.
in 1619. d. 1638. Add. MSS. 8844.
ob. 1651.

Richard Robert, b. 1636, of London gold-
smith. He m. 1st. Hannah dr. of
Simon Fincham of London. 2ly.
1689. Martha dr. of Dukeson D.D.
unm. 1684.

Susan dr. of =
Ric. Nixon of Frense, mar.
set. 22 Aug. 1664. buried
at Outwell 24 Mar. 1675.

John Fincham = Mary, dr. & h. of Thomas William
son & heir, J. P. for Fincham of Outwell, the
co. Camb. d. 1709, last heir male of the elder
set. 80. Will pr. 8 May. branch of the Outwell line. Mary bp. 1632.
Mar. sett. 1656. ob. 1658.

John Fincham Susan Elizabeth
ob. inf. 1665. bp. 1666. m. Mathew
— m. 1710 at Hardy of
Jane bp. 1669. Upwell John Letheringset.
— Novell R. of ob. 2nd. Aug.
Catherine bp. 1673. Hillington. 1731 et. 61.
bur. 1709.

John Fincham = Anne
sold the Outwell Estates, Executrix of the Will
and was of Chalveston in of her husband, and the
the parish of Roxton co. guardian of John his son,
Beds. Will dat. 4th May, living 1746.
1712. pr. 20 Jan. 1726.

Mary Fincham Frances Fincham
bp. 1657. ob. 1702. bp. 1658. mar. 4.
Nov. 1681, Sir Jas. C. Fuller, Bart.

Christiana bur. 1676.

John Fincham only son a minor at his father's death;
living 1746, described as of New Inn; ob. ccel. 1766, and
intestate; administration granted to Francis Coffin.

in 1615, at Outwell, having had issue six sons and five daughters. The eldest was

XVII(c). JOHN FINCHAM (22), baptized December 22nd, 1560. He married, first, at Lynn, Catherine daughter of William Shouldham, in 1589. By this marriage he had one son, John Fincham (23), and Elizabeth an only daughter. Secondly, Mary daughter of John Spence, late wife of J. Dixon, by whom he had six sons and two daughters. He was buried at Outwell in 1621. His Will was proved July 3rd, 1622, D. C.

XVIII(c). JOHN FINCHAM (23), married Christiana daughter of Austin Whale, or Whall, of Catton, Norfolk, Esquire. They appear to have lived some time at Fincham. He was imprisoned in the Bastille at Paris, in the 2nd Charles I, for some supposed political offence during the war with France, and some letters from him relating to that imprisonment will form the contents of Chapter XVII. He was author of "A Treatise on establishing a High Court of Admiralty in England."—*State Papers*, James I, p. 520. He died circa 1649. His issue were four sons and four daughters, of whom his eldest son and heir was

XIX(c). JOHN FINCHAM (24), who married Mary daughter of William Barrett, of Outwell. They had four sons and two daughters. In the Outwell Registers he is called John Fincham, *Junior*. His eldest son and heir was

XX(c). JOHN FINCHAM (25), who married, first, his cousin of the fifth generation, MARY Fincham, sole surviving child of Thomas Fincham of the elder branch. She died without male issue, and he married, secondly, Susan Nixon, of Frenze, Norfolk, in 1664. By her he had issue JOHN (26), who died an infant, in 1665. Afterwards JOHN (27), only son and heir, and seven

daughters, as appears from his tombstone in the chapel at Outwell church, although only six of them are there mentioned by name. In 1673 he presented to the living of Frenze, Thomas Wales, A.B. In 1683, to the living of Cockley Cley, William Constable, M.A.

He died and was buried at Outwell. His Will was proved in the same year, in D. C., London. The following is the inscription on his tombstone :—

Within this chancel [sic] lieth the body of
John Fincham Esq : who departed this life
March 24th, 1709, in the 80th year of his age.
Here also lie his wives, Mary and Susan,
By whom he had two sons and seven daughters,
Most of them buried in or near this place,
Viz. : Mary, Frances, John, Jane,
Catherine, Christian, the last Elizabeth,
The wife of Matthew Hardy, Gent,
Who departed this life August 2nd, 1731,
Aged 61 years, and lieth under this stone.

XXI(c). JOHN FINCHAM (27), only son and heir, left Outwell soon after his father's death, having sold the family estate; and thenceforth the name does not appear again in the Registers of that parish. He married Ann , and went to live at Chawston, in the parish of Roxton, Bedfordshire.¹ His Will was proved in 1726, D. C., leaving his wife Ann sole executrix, and guardian of his only son,

XXII(c). JOHN FINCHAM (28), a minor, who became a member of New Inn, afterwards united to the Middle Temple, London. He died intestate in 1766, and administration of his effects was granted to one Francis *Coffin*, second cousin and next of kin, a name singularly appropriate to the melancholy office of receiving the remains of the last of the Finchams of Outwell !

¹ From the Title Deeds of Peter Huddleston, Esquire, of Norton, Suffolk, the present owner of part of the Outwell estate.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FINCHAMS OF SUFFOLK AND EAST NORFOLK.

On reference to the Calendars of Wills in the Court of Probate at Bury St. Edmund's, I find Finchams in several places in the county of Suffolk, from the end of the 16th century downwards. Sixteen or eighteen villages are mentioned as their various places of residence, they being farmers or middle class tradesmen. Whence they originally sprung, whether from Fincham or Outwell, it is scarcely possible to discover.

The Will of JOHN FINCHAM (29), of Earl Soham, was proved April 7th, 1593. To Margaret his widow he left his "howse." To Robert his eldest son, "one coffer, a black *heckforth*, [heifer, or young cow,] "and all his apparell"; and various bequests to all his other children,—JOHN (30), Andrew, Thomas, and Elizabeth. The following Wills also occur, but have not been consulted :—

- A.D. 1592. Thomas Fincham, of Brandon Ferry.
- 1637. Robert Fincham, of Haverhill.
- 1638. Anthony Fincham, of Thurlow.
- 1639. Matthew Fincham, of Hundon.
- 1670. JOHN FINCHAM (31), of Brandon.
- 1672. Matthew Fincham, of Barnadiston.
- 1682. Henry Fincham, of Brandon.
- 1685. Elizabeth Fincham, of Bury.
- 1689. Edward Fincham, of Barningham.

The next of the name is JOHN FINCHAM (32), of Icklingham, clothier, contemporary with John and

Susan Fincham (XXc), of Outwell. His Will was proved January 10th, 1692. His wife was Susan, and his only son and sole executor was JOHN (33), whom I suspect to be identical with

XXI(d). JOHN FINCHAM (33), of Thelnetham, a considerable landed proprietor, from whom we have a known and manifold descent. His wife was Dorothy White, of Thetford. He was amongst the first 'n these parts to adopt the tenets of the Society of Friends, when that body took its rise in this country about 1670 or 1680; and dying in that communion he was buried in their burial ground at Hopton, Suffolk. His Will is dated 11th month (January), 1710-11; and was proved December 13th, 1712.

Contemporary with him was William Fincham, Rector of Wortham, near Diss, from 1659 to 1680, when he died, aged 67. Also Catherine his wife, aged 71.—*Tombstone in the church.* And in the Parish Register there is the following entry:—

“ William ffyncham ultimus Rectour sepultus fuit in woollen according
“ to the above Act. March 25th—80.”

“ Catherine ffyncham vidua sepulta fuit, Nov. 18th, 1689.”

Also JOHN FINCHAM (34), of Timworth, farmer, whose Will (at Norwich) was proved January 23rd, 1712. Some other names occur at the Registry at Bury, which will not be further alluded to, namely:—

A.D. 1718. Matthew Fincham, of Hundon.

1722. William Fincham, of Bures Hamlet.

1724. William Fincham, of Reed.

1729. Jacob Fincham, of Ixworth.

1750. JOHN FINCHAM (35), of Mellis.

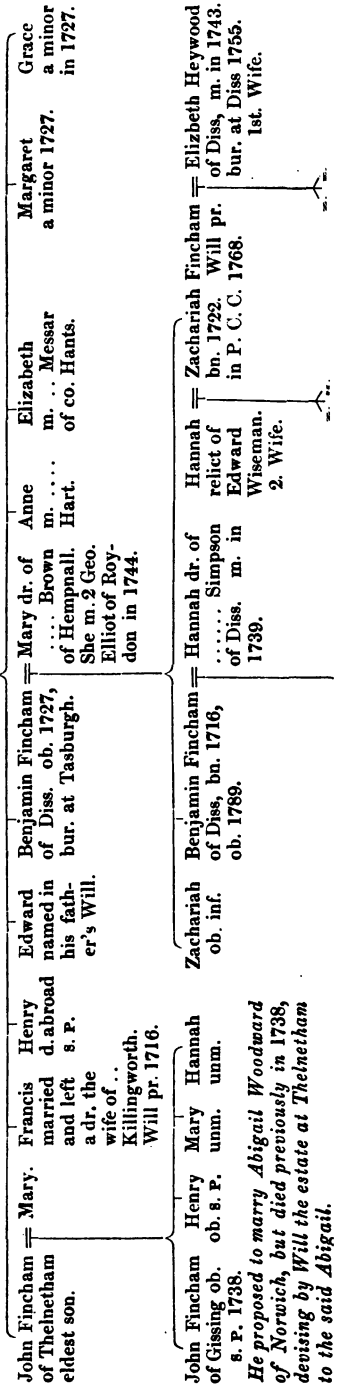
The family of John Fincham, of Thelnetham, consisted of

11
7

FINCHAM of SUFFOLK,

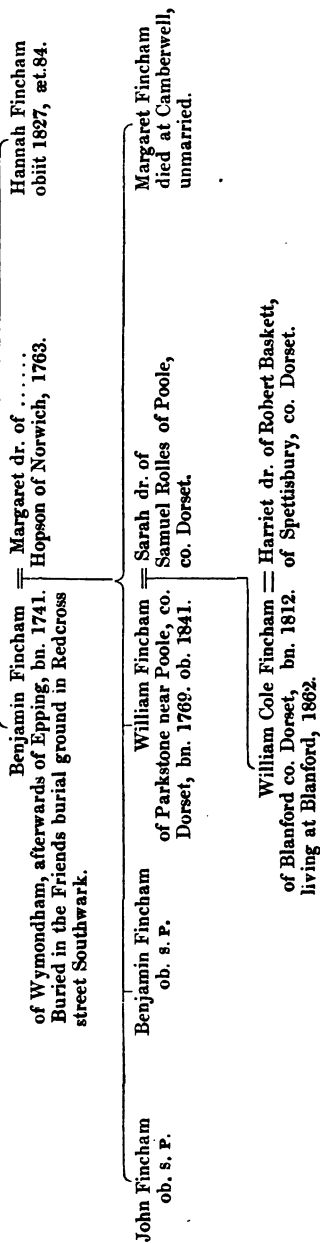
Now (1862.) represented, in the Elder branch by William Cole Fincham of Blanford co. Dorset Esq.
Where this family branched off from the original Stem, has not as yet, been discovered.

John Fincham = Dorothy,
dr. of White of Thetford.
obit ante 31 Dec. 1712.
Will proved at Bury 31 Dec. 1712.



of Norwich, but died previously in 1738,
 devising by Will the estate at Thetnetham
 to the said Abigail.

2. Wife.  Z. H.
 Z. E.



I. JOHN (36).—*Will* of his father.

II. FRANCIS, who died without male issue, in 1716.

III. BENJAMIN (1), of whom hereafter; and six other children.

XXII(d). JOHN FINCHAM (36), inherited his father's lands at Thelnetham and Hopton, and married Mary, by whom he had two sons and two daughters, the eldest being

XXIII(d). JOHN FINCHAM (37), of Gissing. He died at Holbeach, in 1738, and left the Thelnetham estate to Abigail Woodward, of Norwich, to whom he was engaged to be married.¹

Reverting, therefore, to John Fincham, of Thelnetham, we have

XXII(e). BENJAMIN FINCHAM (1), his third son. He married Mary Brown, of Hempnall, and lived at Diss, and was, as I suppose, the founder of the well-known banking establishment in that town. He was buried in the Quakers' burial ground at Tasburgh, in 1727. He had issue two sons, Benjamin (2) and Zachariah (1), and a daughter, who married Dr. Goddard, a physician.

XXIII(e). BENJAMIN FINCHAM (2), was born in 1716, and married Hannah Simpson, of Diss; and the issue of this marriage was Benjamin (3), and Hannah.

XXIV(e). BENJAMIN FINCHAM (3), was born 1741, and married, in 1763, Margaret Hopson, of Norwich,

¹ This information, together with many other notes of births, marriages, and deaths, is from the Quakers' original Registers at Tivetshall and Norwich, now at Somerset House, London.

where he lived some time in a house said to have belonged to the notorious Kett. He was afterwards of Wymondham, then of Epping, and was buried at Southwark, in 1789. His issue were John (38), Benjamin (4),¹ and Margaret, who all died without issue, and fourthly,

XXV(e). WILLIAM FINCHAM, of Parkstone, in Dorsetshire. He married Sarah Rolles, of Poole, and died at Blandford, in 1846, leaving a son,

XXVI(e). WILLIAM COLE FINCHAM, of Blandford, in Dorsetshire, Esquire. He married, in 1855, Harriett, daughter of Robert Baskett, Esquire, of Spettisbury, and has no issue. He was the last member of the family educated in the communion of the Society of Friends, and was himself baptized into the Church of England in 1861.

Reverting to the family of Benjamin (1), third son of John Fincham, of Thelnetham, we have his second son,

XXIII(f). ZACHARIAH FINCHAM (1), born 1722. He married, first, Elizabeth Heywood, of Diss, in 1743, and by this marriage he had issue:—

I. ZACHARIAH (2), born 1747, of whom presently.

II. ELIZABETH, born 1748, baptized 1763.²

¹ Benjamin had now become the favourite name in the family, and Mr. Fincham, of Blandford, tells me that he remembers his grandfather saying that he once dined with seven Benjamin Finchams! Such a fact is very suggestive of genealogical difficulties, and the inconveniences of rapidly divided and sub-divided inheritances!

² For these extracts, and many others from the Diss Registers, I am indebted to the liberality and kindness of the Rev. C. R. Manning, Rector.

Benjamin Fincham = Mary Anne bn. 20 Nov. 1749, Q. R. dr. of bp. 17 Ap. 1764, <i>Diss R.</i> French, ob. ob. 1813, set. 63. 1 Nov. 1811, set. 54.		Zachariah Fincham = of Diss Banker, eld. son of Zach. & E. Heywood, his first wife. Bn. 1747. ob. 1827. set. 80.		Harriett dr. of Thornton. <i>Diss Ch. Reg.</i> bn. 1748, Q. R. bp. 24 July 1763, bp. 30 Mar. 1762. <i>Diss Church Reg.</i> m. Henry Browne of Diss Esq.		Elizabeth bn. 1748, Q. R. bp. 30 Mar. 1762. <i>Diss Church Reg.</i> m. Henry Browne of Diss Esq.		Mary bn. 9 Feb. 1750. bp. 30 Mar. 1762. <i>Diss Church Reg.</i> m. Henry Browne of Diss Esq.		Susan mar. Newton Esq.									
Benjamin William James b. 1792, b. 1798, ob. s. p. 1836. 1856.		Mary-Anne ob. inf.		Jane b. 1788, ob. 1850.		Thorton Fincham = John Flower- dew of Wort- ham, in 1804. d. 1834, at Palgrave co. Suffolk.		Zachariah bn. 1772. ob. s. p.		Robert a Banker at Diss, b. 1786. d. 1860. s. p.		Catherine Elizabeth, m. C. Simpson cham of London, 1859. - ob. 1858.		Caroline, bn. 1789. m. Ed- ward Locke d. unm. M. R. C. S.					
John b. 1809. bn. 1805, marr. at the d. s. p. 1836. Cape.		Robert Fincham = Elizabeth only dr. of H. Stanley Mac Adam of Margate.		George Fincham = b. 1814, living at the Cape of good Hope.		M. J. S. dr. & coh. of G. Aldrich Esq. Somerset District, S. Africa; formerly of Beccles co. Suff.		Benjamin bn. 1820, living at the Cape 1858.		Zachary- Charles bn. 1823, died s. p. 1817. unm.		Anne d. inf. bn. 1812. m. 1st. Will. Whatley. m. 2 ly. Newton Fred. Thornton.		Anne Fincham bn. 1812. m. 1st. Will. Whatley. m. 2 ly. Newton Fred. Thornton.		Caroline b. 1824. ob. 1839.			
Edwin liv- ing 1858.		Arthur m. at the Cape Miss Aldrich.		Geo. Aldrich Fincham. bn. 1848, bn. 1850.		Francis- Arthur- William bn. 1852, bn. 1855.		Margaret- Deborah- Fincham bn. 1837.		Anne- Flowerdew Fincham bn. 1839.		Georgiana- Susanna- Lambert bn. 1841.		Magdalen- Johanna- Susanna bn. 1843.		Jemina- Jacoba- Petronilla bn. 1846.		Caroline Elizabeth bn. 1857.	

III. BENJAMIN (5), born 1749, baptized 1764. He married Mary Anne French, and had three sons,—Benjamin (6), James, and William; and four daughters.

IV. MARY, born 1750, baptized 1762. She married Henry Brown, of Diss, Esquire, and is mentioned in the Preface.

V. SUSAN, who married Cæsar Newton, Esquire, of Sporle. He died in 1825, æt. 76; and his wife in 1828, æt. 72.¹

It will be seen that three members, and probably all, of this family renounced Quakerism one by one, and received the sacrament of adult baptism in the parish church of Diss.

XXIV(f). ZACHARIAH FINCHAM (2), married Harriet Thornton, and died 1827. His issue were Zachariah (3), Benjamin (7), who both died s. p., and seven other children, of whom the fifth in the family was

XXV(f). THORNTON FINCHAM, born in 1780. He married Ann Flowerdew, of Wortham, in Suffolk, in 1804, and had issue nine sons,—Thornton, Edwin, JOHN (39), Robert, George, Arthur, Benjamin (8), Richard, and, lastly, Zachariah, who died s. p., 1860, having lent considerable assistance in the compilation of the family history. There were also four daughters.

XXVI(f). ROBERT FINCHAM, fourth son of the last-mentioned, married Elizabeth Mary McAdam, and has issue two sons. Baker street, London.

Reverting once more to Zachariah Fincham (1), we find that he married, secondly, Hannah Wiseman, of Diss, widow, by which marriage he had issue, first, JOHN (40), of Haverhill, in Suffolk, who died s. p., and, secondly,

¹ This information, received since the printing of the pedigree, is from the Rev. W. Grigson, Rector of Winbergh.

XXIV(g). FRANCIS FINCHAM, of Kenninghall, in Norfolk, and afterwards of Charing Cross, London. He married Ann Wiseman, of Diss, and had six sons, of whom JOHN (41), the youngest, died at Calcutta, in 1821; and one daughter. He died in 1810.

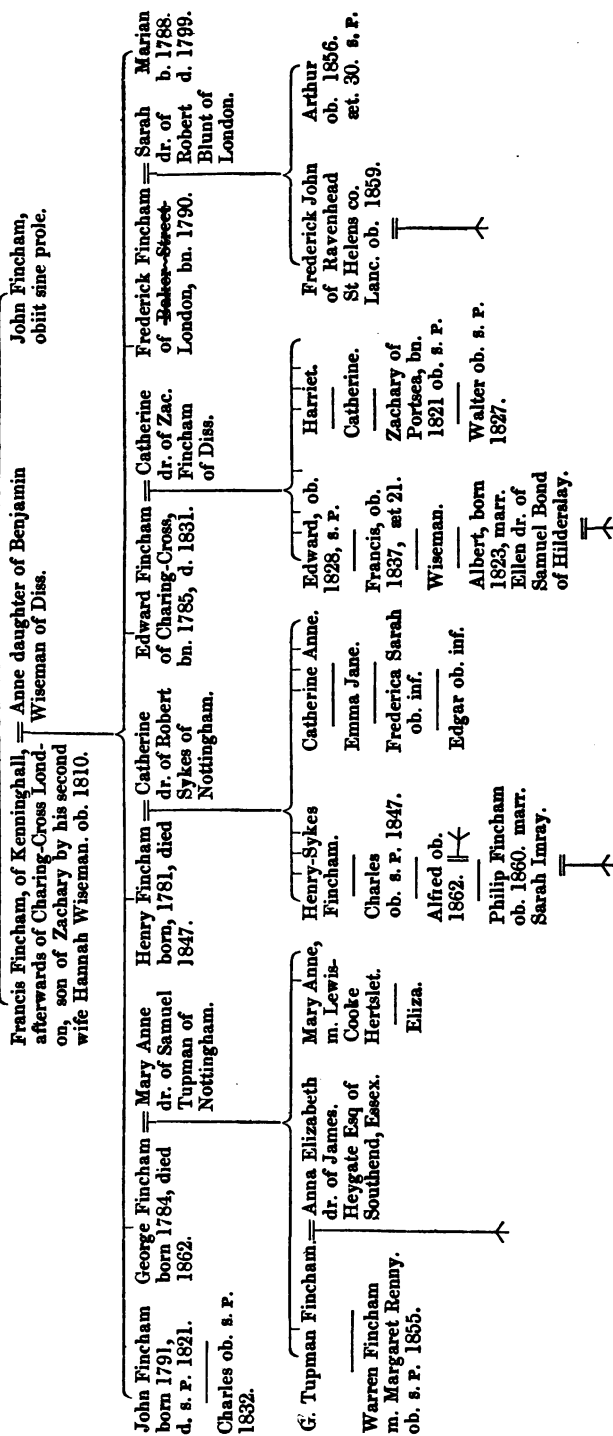
XXV(g). HENRY FINCHAM, eldest son, of Charing Cross, born in 1781,¹ married Catherine Sykes, of Nottingham, and died in 1847. Of eight children, his third son,

XXVI(g). ALFRED FINCHAM, having lived 15 years in China, died at Hong Kong, in May of the present year, 1862, and is being brought home to be buried, as I expect, by the side of his ancestors in Fincham churchyard, where no adult burial of this family has taken place for more than three centuries. His cousin Albert, son of Edward and Catherine Fincham, is now the occupant and manager of the large Tea Establishment at Charing Cross, London.

With these collateral and co-existing branches of the family, it will be seen that we arrive at the termination of several regular successions to the present time, being the XXVIth generation from William II of England, through a period of 780 years. Unfortunately the genealogical chain is broken in two places, but there is no reason whatever to doubt the correctness of the position of every generation as given above. Indeed there is proof available for them all.

There were other offshoots at various periods whose connection with the old tree it is impossible to trace.

¹ The dates of the births of this family are from the Kenninghall Registers.



There were families in London, deriving from Outwell, in the 17th and 18th centuries, of whom nothing has hitherto been said. On the borders of Norfolk and Suffolk, as might be supposed from the list of names and places quoted from the Registers at Bury, a widespread connection has continued to increase and extend through the adjacent villages, until, as if by the attraction of their origin, they have again found a habitation, though in very humble life, about the source and seat of their first existence in England. One shoot, especially remarkable for longevity in the sons, I have traced from the parish of Mildenhall to Hockwold, Feltwell, Boughton, and Fincham. At Mildenhall there were Finchams of the Society of Friends in the beginning of the eighteenth century, derived very probably from Thelnetham. Of these, Francis was buried at Hockwold, May 13th, 1829, at the patriarchal age of 101. His son Francis was buried at Feltwell, about 1840, aged 85; having had 16 children, of whom Francis, his eldest son, is now living, in possession of a freehold cottage of his own, after the manner of a squatter, on Boughton fen, a venerable grey-haired shepherd, at the advanced age of 83 years, having five brothers and four sisters, with various nephews and nieces, five sons and two daughters, with 23 grandchildren, all living in 1862.

In Her Majesty's Dockyards the name of Fincham will long be had in remembrance. In the early part of the present century a Mr. James Fincham, from Norfolk, became an officer in the Government Establishment at Woolwich. His son was the late Mr. JOHN FINCHAM (42), of Highland House, Portsea, who rapidly rose to eminence and distinction in his profession of ship-building. In 1840 he published his "History of Naval Architecture," with plates, &c., folio, which reached a third edition in 1852. And in 1854 a "Treatise on Mastings Ships" was edited by

him. The following obituary notice of him from the "Times" will fitly conclude this outline and sketch of a very worthy English family : " The death of this gentleman took place at his residence at Highland Lodge, near Portsmouth, yesterday morning, in his 75th year. The deceased gentleman will be best remembered by the general public as for many years master shipwright of Portsmouth Dockyard, and more especially as the builder of the celebrated Arrogant, the first screw frigate possessed by this country, and still looked upon as one of the finest of her class. Much of his time and study was devoted to the introduction of the screw propeller into the British navy. For a long period he was superintendent of the School of Naval Architecture at Portsmouth. His 'History of Naval Architecture,' 'Outlines of Shipbuilding,' a 'Treatise on Laying-off Ships,' and on 'Masting Ships,' are unequalled in the English language for the amount of research and professional knowledge they contain. As an acknowledgment of their merits the Emperor Nicholas of Russia presented Mr. Fincham with a snuff-box set with diamonds, and Mehemet Ali presented him with the order of the 'Bey.' Mr. Fincham will be deeply mourned by a large circle of his friends and family." —*The Times*, December 7th, 1859.

CHAPTER XVII.

LETTERS OF JOHN FINCHAM, OF OUTWELL, ESQUIRE, AND J.P. OF THE ISLE OF ELY, UNDER CONFINEMENT IN A FRENCH PRISON, TEMP. CHARLES I.

In the year 1628, during the unfortunate war with France, Mr. Fincham, of Outwell, was employed in that country on some secret state business. He was arrested and confined in the Bastille prison at Paris, where he was very cruelly and shamefully treated. Amongst the state papers of that period are some important and interesting letters relating to this matter. Passing by some formal communications with Sir John Coke, Knight, then one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, I will only notice a brief series of a more domestic character, in the hand-writing of Mr. Fincham, which went most of them through the hands of the Bishop of London, William Laud, afterwards the celebrated Archbishop of Canterbury. The Bishop's letter to the Secretary it will be sufficient to epitomize,—the others are given in full.

No. 95. *The Bishop of London to Secretary Coke.*¹

London House,
Dec. 28, 1629.

The Bishop has received letters from Dr. Dee, the Ambassador's Chaplain in France, who enclosed three others from an English gentleman there imprisoned. Why the Doctor

¹ State Papers, Domestic, vol. 153, p. 127. *Public Record Office*. I am unable to say whether Sir John Coke, Knight, was of the Leicester (Norfolk) family, and related to the highly distinguished and eminent Sir Edward Coke, H. M. Chief Justice of the Common Pleas at this time.

sent these letters the Bishop does not know. He is not acquainted with the writer of them. He sends them to the Secretary, partly because he is named in them, and there are some things in them which a Secretary of State may make use of, &c., &c.

No. 95. (1). *John Fincham to Dr. Dee and Mr. Neve.*

Right worshipfull.

I beseech you most humbly to pardon my boldnes and importunities, for my afflictions and most cruell and unjust persecutions have been so long so many and so great, as I am wholly overthrowen by them, both in my health estate and reputation, and all by false and vowed enemies, and they dayly encreasing with my miseries have brought me into a desperate estate, if the Lord's mercy be not the greater towards me; in truth what I have and doe continually suffer is intollerable, unspeakable, yea and incredible, but to us that dayly feele it. I most humbly crave your favours and assistance in being continall suitors for my present libertie with my Lord Ambassadour, whoe if his Excellency would vouch safe to request my libertie earnestly of the King of Fra: it would be presently granted him, as well as the liberties of others wch be forth of prison. If ever I offended the King of France¹ or his state, I desire to have a condigne punishment, and yt my proces may be made. I humbly cry for justice here in France, and renounce all mercy, but in the bastille here is neither the one nor other to be had.—I was sent into France by a person of state and authoritie in England for his Maties. service, not haveing any occasion to leave my poore and distressed wife and children, but only by the command of higher powers, to wch I most promptly obeyd, as in my duty I was bound; and yet I being here arrived in the time of warr and danger, would not have long resided in France, had I not been assured of my safety by the Queen Mother [Marie de Medicis], as Card. Berule and Count du Tilliere both assured me, of her part; but I finde

¹ Louis XIII.

a cruell difference between promises and deeds, against all lawe justice and equitie.—I am a subject of the King of England's, and being a prisoner in France, I must either be a prisoner of state, or warr, both wch are accoustomed among all nations to be sett at liberte upon the conclusion of a generall peace between two crownes. I knowe not wherein I have offended the King of France, (I am sure I have not), and correction without instruction is accounted tyranny. Most worthy and worshipfull gentlemen, I doe crave at your hands yt ye would be pleased to present my most humble services and sufferinges to his Excellency, and on my knees with erected hands and teares in my eyes that he would vouchsafe to have present pittie and mercy upon me, my miseries, my pore disconsolate wife and children, which cruelly suffer by my most unjust imprisonment; and lett not I beseech you the bruit¹ of my religion be an impeachment of my liberte; for my religion, as also my endeavours to his Maties. service, yea and the many effects thereof, is well knowne to my Lord's Grace of Canterbury, and Sr. John Cooke Secretary of State; and so I entreat you to acquaint my Lord Ambassador, as an assured verete, of my true and sincere religioun and service towards God my Kinge and country; and if it be my unparalleled hard fortune to remaine in this hell upon earth, after your departures out of France, I entreat you both to acquaint my Lord's Grace of Canterbury,² as allso Mr. Secretary Cooke, wth. my miserie;

¹ Bruit, bru-it, Fr.—*rumour, report*, twice used in the Bible, viz., Jer. x. 22; Nahum iii. 19; which latter passage represents exactly the fears entertained by the imprisoned patriot, "all that hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hands over thee."

² This was Archbishop Abbot, Laud's immediate predecessor, who had recently been in greater trouble than poor Mr. Fincham himself, though not deprived of his personal liberty. The circumstances are so extraordinary, that the reader will excuse the digression in briefly referring to them. Whilst taking a journey into Hampshire, the Archbishop was invited by Lord Zouch to hunt in Brams-hill Park. Pretending to be a woodman, he took up a cross-bow to make a shot at a buck, but unhappily hit the keeper, who had run in among the herd of deer to bring them up to a fairer mark. The arrow pierced the left arm, and dividing the larger vessels, immediate death ensued. This untoward event caused the greatest consternation,—the like had never happened in the Church of England. It was a sore affliction to many good men, who lamented the scandal which must inevitably fall upon the Church, for in the eye of general councils and the canon law the Archbishop was tainted, and incapable of performing any sacred function. Amongst other difficulties,

and to implore earnestly their favours and assistance for the present procuring of my liberty, by his Maties. letters in my behalf to his Ambassadour yt shal be for the time present; and also yt you would be pleased to advise my pore wife the best meanes whereby sche may procure my liberty, by petitions or otherwise; you shall heare of her being at my brother's in Paul's churchyard, at the signe of the Castle, a woollen draper; or at my sister Grovenor's in Lombard street, at the three swans, her husband being a mercer. I will end as I began, humbly craveing your favours, intercessions, and pardon, for a pore gentleman your countryman and most faithfull loveinge and humble servant,

Jo: FINCHAM.

From ye base bastill,
this 15 of December, 1629.

Would either of you vouchsafe to send me but 3 lines in answer hereof by this bearer, sealed with 2 scales as this is, what your assured knowledg is of my liberty, it would be an unspeakable comfort to me, with an assurance of the fidelity of this bearer. For theis 18 months I have been close prisoner, I have never receaved any messuag or lettre from any frend I have, nor permitted ever to write to any, butt by stealth, to my great charges and care, and in the most of them I have been betrayed. If either of you would be pleased to desire Mr. Humfry Cross, messenger to my Lo. of Canterbury, to sollicite my liberty, he would doo it, he dwells in the old baly nere St. Pulcher's Church. [Old Bailey, St. Sepulchre's].

Indorsed. To my right worll. my most worthy frendes Mr. Doctor Dee and Mr. Neve, give this I pray you with all speed.

Good Sir, I beseech you to reade scale and send this inclosed with all speed you can possibly, and to give 2 carde [illegible] to this bearer, and I will truly repay it you.

Sirs, I have neither woollen lininge nor mony, for had I, I would not be thus bold nor importunate, which you pardon me I humbly beseech you.

four Bishops elect refused to be consecrated by him. It was not until after some months' delay that the Archbishop obtained the King's pardon, and a dispensation in full form from a Commission of Bishops and Civilians. He was nevertheless after this suspended, and restored to favor again about Christmas, 1628, at the request of the House of Lords.—Rose, *Biograph. Dict.*, vol. i, p. 23.

No. 95. (2). *The same to Dr. Dee.*

Sir,

I beseech you to present my most humble service and duty to my Lord Ambassadour, beseeching his Excellency to have present pittie upon me, and my most cruell and unjust suffering; and did his Exc. know the importance and necessity of my present liberte, I should not have been here one month after his arrivall, and of this I am most assured. Tell his Exc. yt I humbly crave he would tell ye King of France, or Card. Richlieu, yt if I have offended the King of France, or his estate, or the queen mother, or Card. Richlieu, eyther in word or deed, yt my proces may be presently made, and I suffer condigne punishmt, a thinge most juste, which I infinitely desire; or if I have offended ye Kinge of England, or his estate, yt I may be sent into England, and punished accordinge to my deserts; butt if upon suspitions most light and unjust I have offended the false subjects of the Kinge of England, I am not hear to answer for it, nor much less to be thus cruelly punished most unjustley by the Kinge of France, or his cardnall, whome I never wittingly or willingly offended in all my life, as I am a Xtien, to my knowledge. I have presumed to write diverse letters to his Exc. as allso to send into England by Sr. Tho. Ditchington, and Monsr. le Roque, my fellowe prisoners and camerade; butt whether his Excell. have receaved them or no I knowe not, for never have I receaved any answer nor comfort as yett of them. the lord of heaven send me some good consolation, for my miseries have been and are so many and great, as I am reduced into a most miserable and desperate estate. I and my man be almost naked for want of cloathes and lininge or mony, and which is worse, without any reliefe or hope therof, yt wee are ready to starve wth cold. for Christ Jesus sake have mercy upon your pore contryman and most humble and faithfull servant,

Jo: FINCHAM.

And vouchsafe I most humble entreat you to send me butt 3 lines in answer, by this bearer, at this present.
18 Dec: 1629.

No. 95. (3). *The same to his Wife and Children.*

Most dear and lovinge wife and children,

I admire at your silence, having been deprived of my company by most cruell imprisonment this 19 months, that you have not writt to me, nor endeavoured to procure my libertie, by the sollicitings of frends and acquaintance. I am only left alone in prison, all other, English Scotch and Dutch, being set at libertie, by reason of the peace between the 2 crownes. For the King of France or his state I never offended, in thought word nor deed; for the King of England, if I have offended, I desire to be sent into my country, and to be punished according to my offence, for I am his subject, and not to the King of France. But I am assured I am punished here, upon the base and ungrateful information of certain trayterous and malicious English Priests and Jesuits, which have most untruly and unconscionably writt against me into france, both before my imprisonment and since, which God forgive them. . . . They have and doe render me ill for good. For them I have lost my goods, my honor, and fortune, and for them and ther good I would and will expose my life in a good cause; and they know my estate, my house, my table, yea my life, have ever been free and open, as any house in England. The more foole I, to be thus rewarded by them most ungrateful: In a word I have and doe suffer unmercifully and unspeakably, and in you and them do my libertie consist, by your earnest sollicitation. I never did them harm, nor thought them any, and therefore they are most cruell. I pray that I may convince them, by all that is good and holy, to sollicite and procure my present libertie, and to petition incessantly both the King and Queen of England, for whose cause I suffer, and for whose only service I came into France, that their majesties would be pleased to write to the King of France for my liberte . . . for your good and consolation. And did the King of England know how necessary my liberte was, and how needful for his majesties service crown and dignity, I should not remain here one month, and so you may assure his majestie in the petition; but I charge you shew this letter to no creature, nor impart this clause to no priest, nor Roman Catholic, as you love me or my liberte.

¹ His wife was Christiana daughter of Austin Whall, of Catton, Norfolk, Esq.

I have writt you many letters to this effect by many English people, but whether they have been delivered or no I do not know : in many of them I fear I have been betrayed to my grief, in sharpe and most cruell suffering.—God forgive them, and give us his grace, that we may live in his fear and die in his favor, and let us pray one for another, and I charge you cease not to be a continuall dayly sollicitor for your lovinge poore and loyall husband in chaynes,

JO : FINCHAM.

Dec. 21, 1629.

He obtained his release almost immediately afterwards, as appears by the following letter :—

To the Secretary of State.¹

Right Honorable,

In truth when and as often as I have wayted on your honor, since my coming home, I have thought to move you in beseeching your honor to have consideration and commiseration of me and my sufferings, but when I have been with you, out of a respective [respectful] dutie and shamefastness, I have not named it to any purpose, but by circumstance and afar off : but indeed my present necessities and debts do so press me, as most unwillingly I am enforced most humbly to implore your honor's present aide and assistance : I am engaged and indebted first to monsieur Du-Pont 20L, which he brought and lent me in my necessity in the bastille, to clothe me and my man, for which kindness poore man he was two months after put into the bastille, where he remained six months to his utter undoing, he being now in England very poore. I borrowed also at my coming forth of the bastill 10L of Mr. Kirkham at my Lord Ambassador's, to pay my man his wages, for the two years he was with me in prison, and to buy me boots and other things I wanted for my journey to London : and also I am indebted to Mr. Crew for all my charges between paris and London, which is 10L

¹ State Papers, Domestic, vol. 160, No. 50.

more. And all these do dayly call upon me for their moneys, besides my many other necessities which press me very much, and which I am ashamed to deliver, but only that in my absence my wife has been constrayned to sell her plate, for the maintenance of herself and children, all other friends dealing most unnaturally with her in my absence.

I will make bold to acquaint you with two of my great losses since my departure; the one was certain lands I had mortgaged to Sir Giles Allington for 300L was by him sold away to others, not being redeemed in time, 300L to my loss. My second loss was a thousand pound [the property of a niece, his ward], through my absence, and my brother's negligence. I beseech your honor for the Lord's sake to pardon my boldness, and to preserve me the 140L which I claim humbly as due to me from his majestie, and which would be a great comfort and reliefe to us now in our necessities.

I also beseech your honor to remember me effectually with Mr. Barwell, to have some good employment in this generall draining [of the Fens], as Paymaster or Surveyor of the works, or some other profitable place. Before my goinge into France I was a Commissioner in the great commission of sewars, as also of the Peace for the Isle of Ely, but in my absence I am left out to my dishonor.

If I thought his majestie did earnestly desire [the arrest of] the Bishop of Chalcedon, I could work it in short time assuredly.

I pray your Honor not to acquaint the bearer with any of the contents hereof.

Good my Lorde, pardon your Honor's most humble and most faithful servant,

Jo: FINCHAM.

Holborn, Feb: 9, 1629 [Civil year].

CHAPTER XVIII.

WILLS AND TESTAMENTS OF THE FINCHAMS.

In addition to the aid derived from ancient Wills in tracing out a family genealogy, they are both curious in their language and valuable for their illustration of the religion and manners of the times in which they were made. Those of the Finchams are extremely interesting in this respect. In perusing them successively, we shall be forcibly struck with some of the prominent features of Romish error, in contrast with the light of our reformed religion. The usual introductory clause, or first bequest of early wills, disposes of the soul ; whether to Almighty God, or to the Virgin Mary, or to the Blessed Saints, or to the Holy Angels, is almost invariably a matter of equal concern (or indifference) to the testator. Whereas in Wills subsequent to the Reformation, he expresses his trust in the death and passion, or the merits and mediation, of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This latter feature is conspicuous in the Wills of the Finchams of Outwell. Nothing can be more striking than the contrast, or in itself more plainly instructive.

Then the dedication of property to absolutely superstitious uses ; large gifts to the church, for masses and services for the dead ; propitiatory legacies to the priests, in payment for securing the intercessions of saints ; bequests to the poor, as expiatory sacrifices, to balance against sins committed and duties neglected ; all testify to the darkness that covered the land and the people in those times. It is not indeed the gift, but

the erroneous faith of the giver, which constrains our concern. It has been the too general sin of later times, to lapse into the opposite extreme of cold indifference to the claims of religion and charity, in the disposition of worldly estates. A bequest to the poor, or to the church of God, has become almost the exception, and the responsibilities of stewardship have been to a great extent forgotten.

But already we rejoice in the hope that this darkness also will soon be past. We may quote the prophet's oft-repeated words, and say again, that the church is "putting on her beautiful garments," spiritually, too, we trust, and not merely in ceremonials, as the shining of the light of truth leads on; and many a large and noble act of Christian charity, whose praise is in itself, bespeaks a happy desire in its designer not to care so much to lay up treasure for himself, as to be rich towards God.

1. WILL of Adam de Fyncham, Attorney General to Kings Edward II and III. Dated Wednesday next after the feast of the Assumption, 11th Edward III (1337), and proved the following year.

This Will is of unusual interest. It ought rather perhaps to be called his Testament, as it relates only to personals. It is nearly 50 years older than the earliest documents of the kind in the Public Probate Offices. The names of the testator's relatives are put in italics, and explanatory notes are added. The original is at Stow.

In Dei nomine. Amen. Ego Adam de Fyncham, sane memorie existens, in presencia Rogeri de Shulldham et *Radulphi filii mei*, die mercurii proximâ post festum assumptionis beate marie, anno regni Regis Edwardi tercii post

conquestum undecimo, apud Fyncham condidi testamentum in hunc modum. In primis lego corpus meum sepelli infra ecclesiam Sancti Martini de Fyncham, juxta *Anabillam uxorem meam*.—Item lego meliorem bestiam¹ meam coram corpore meo procedendam, ad opus Rectoris ecclesie antedictae.—Item lego domino Willielmo parochiali capellano² ii³, clerico parochiali sex denarios;—capellano parochiali ecclesie Sancti Michaelis xii⁴, et Roberto clerico parochiali Sancti Michaelis supertunicam meam de estate cum capicio.⁵—Item lego centum solidos pro animâ meâ distribuendos inter pauperes et minores ville de Fyncham:—Item lego xx⁶. distribuendos inter pauperes de Thorpe:—Item &c de Bucton:—Item &c de Stoke ferrie:—alicui sex denarios, alicui xii⁴, aliquibus plus, aliquibus minus, prout indigeant et necesse habeant.—Legó eciam *Anabille filie Willielmi filii mei* x marcas pro maritagio suo.—Item *Alicie filie Johannis* &c.—Item lego quandam annulum aureum,⁴ per quem Anabilla uxor mea et ego fuimus conjugati, et quandam firmaculum aureum,⁴ pro me tumbe Sancti Edmundi Regis et Martyris

¹ "My best horse to precede my body at my burial, for the use of the Rector of the said church." Mortuaries, though originally voluntary, became a customary payment, claimed by and due to the minister, in very many parishes, as amends for personal tithes or other duties neglected or forgotten. After the lord's heriot or best good was taken, the second best chattel was reserved for the church, and was taken thither at the funeral with the corpse. They were afterwards regulated by statute, 21 Henry VIII, cap. 6, and a money payment fixed.—*Stephens's Commentaries on the Laws of England*, vol. 3, p. 98.

² "To Sir William the *parish chaplain*." This cannot mean *parish priest* as we say, for he was the Rector if any one. The difference in the legacies marks him superior to the *parish clerk*, as two shillings are to sixpence. Private individuals of wealth and rank appointed their own chaplain, or even two, or more, to say mass for their souls for a year, as this testator does at the end of his Will. Perhaps the parish chaplain was one ready to perform this service, for all who might desire it, in the *parish church*.

³ "To Robert the parish clerk of St. Michael's my summer cloak with its hood." Capicium—capitis tegmen.—*Du Cange*.

⁴ "A certain gold ring, with which Anabilla my wife and I were united in marriage, and a certain gold brooch, to be taken to the tomb (or shrine) of St. Edmund king and martyr [at Bury], and there fixed." Rings and brooches, it is well known, were the most usual offerings at the shrines of saints. The immense amount and value of these and similar gifts to the church, taken away at the dissolution of the monasteries, "may be conjectured," says Dugdale, "by that one monastery of Saint Edmund's Bury, whence was taken, as our records testify, five thousand marks of gold and silver, besides divers stones of great value."—*Dugd. Monast. Angl.*, vol. i, p. 1050.—"The jewels and gold of the shrine of

deportari et ibidem attachiari.—Item lego Thome Lai servienti meo duo quarteria frumenti¹ et duo quarteria ordeï.²—Item lego *cuilibet filiorum et filiarum Alicie filie mee* unum quarterium siliginis,³ vel unum quarterium ordeï.—Item lego magistro scholarum de Lincolnie robam⁴ meam integram de cameletto; et Phillippo Capellano robam meam integram de bluetto⁵; et Rogero de Dokkyng robam meam sine collobio de rubeo medleto⁶; et magistro Petro collobium de eadem sectâ,⁷ et *Johanni et Thome consanguineis meis* duas robas integras que sunt ex liberatione fontis clericorum⁸ et Galfredi le Scrope.—Item lego *Katerine sorori mee* unum quarterium frumenti, et unum ordeï.—Item lego *Alicie filie Alicie* de Frenze unam vaccam &c.—Item lego Galfrido Fiz unum quarterium ordeï.—Item Johanni Elwyn &c.—Item lego duobus capellanis pro animâ meâ divina celebrantibus in ecclesiâ Sancti Martini de Fyncham per unum annum ix marcas.—Et ad omnia ista exequenda dilectum mihi *Johannem filium meum* et Robertum Ordiner meos constituo executores per presentes.—Et si quid superfuerit de catallis meis post mortem meum inventis, ubicunque reperta fuerint, ea lego et concedo *Johanni filio meo* antedicto, præter xx'. quos lego prefato Roberto Ordiner pro servicio suo. In cujus rei testimonium meum sigillo meo consigno et includo. Datum die anno et loco supradictis. Probatum fuit &c.—XVII Kalend: Julii, 1338.—*Archd. Norf.*

"St. Thomas Becket, of Canterbury, were carried off in two strong coffers, on the shoulders of seven or eight men; for the removal of the rest of the spoils, six and twenty carts are said to have waited at the church door. . . . The jewels no doubt went into the royal stores." (Henry VIII).—*Stanley's Memorials of Canterbury*, p. 239.

¹ Frumentum, ordeum, et siligo—wheat, barley, and rye.

² "My entire robe of camlet."—See notes following.

³ "Of blue." There was much variety of colour at different early periods in legal robes; and judges and others had their summer and winter vestments.—*Dugdale*.

⁴ "My robe of red sheepskin, without the cape, or collar." "Medleto pro meleto, seu melote, pellis ovina."—*Du Cange*.

⁵ "De eadem sectâ"—"of the same cut," or fashion. The word refers not merely to shape but to ornament. According to Canon 74, ecclesiastical persons may not wear "guards, welts, long buttons, or cuts."

⁶ This passage is difficult to understand. It seems to refer to two robes, one of which he had received in right of his appointment as *Clericus Regis*, and the other from his friend Geoffrey le Scrope, who was Attorney General 14 Edward II. The full meaning of *fontis clericorum* will be found probably in the history of the college of *Clerk-in-Well*, commonly called Clerkenwell, London.

2. The WILL of John de Fyncham, son and heir of Adam, has not been found, but an INVENTORY¹ of his goods and chattels is preserved at Stow. This Inventory is dated Michaelmas Day, 13 Edward III (1339). A good fac-simile copy of it, printed for me privately, is here inserted. It contains the names of about 140 articles of furniture, plate, books, robes, armour, agricultural implements, and cattle. Some of the words are obsolete, others are so contracted as to be unintelligible to the ordinary reader, and others involve information of more or less interest; so that I have felt it desirable to write it out *in extenso*, with a translation, in parallel columns, and a few notes subjoined.

INVENTORIUM bonorum et
cattallorum Johannis de Fyn-
cham, factum die mercurii in
festo Sancti Michaelis Arc-
angeli, anno regni regis Ed-
wardi tercii post conquestum
xiii, apud Fyncham Berton et
Thorpe. Et Thome Lay ser-
vienti ipsius liberatis ad re-
spondendum de iisdem.

DE STAURO.

ii. stottis² pro carecta.
i. hakeney pro servo.
ii. stottis pro caruca.
vi. boves tractantes.
viii. vacce, quarum due sunt melche,
quatuor sunt ferwe, et una ad
firmam dimissa.
viii. boviculi. ix. juvence.
vii. vituli. ii. sues. i. aper.
vii. porcii ad mactandum.

INVENTORY of the goods
and chattels of John de Fyn-
cham, made on Wednesday,
the feast of St. Michael the
Archangel, in the 13th year
of the reign of King Edward
the Third after the conquest,
at Fyncham Barton and
Thorpe. And the said goods,
&c., were delivered to Thomas
Lay, his servant, to be respon-
sible for the same.

OF THE STOCK.

2 young cart oxen.
1 riding horse for the servant.
2 young plough oxen.
6 draft oxen.
7 cows, of which two are milch,
four are dry, and one has been
sent to the farm.
7 steers. 9 heifers.
7 calves. 2 sows. 1 boar.
7 pigs for killing.

¹ This Inventory, it will be observed, is taken in the year after his father's death, but it bears the son's name. We can only suppose that he required it for his own purposes, as for sale, transfer, or simple valuation. He himself lived many years after this.

² Stottis, *stots*, still so called. The termination "is" throughout this Inventory is awkwardly used to denote the plural, where the proper Latin was not at hand, as for instance, "carte-ropis," "tongis," "mazeris," &c.

- xx. porciculi.
 iii. xx. multones liberati henrico at-
 lond per i talliam.¹
 xxx. ancee juvenes. xviii. capones.
 xii. galline. ii. gallini.
 xx. anates et drakis juvenes et ve-
 teres.

ITEM IN CARETARIO.

- iii. carette ferre-ligate, cum copais
 et scalis.
 ii. caruce cum totis apparatibus.
 ii. crates. i. barwe.

ITEM IN STABULO.

- Totæ felleratæ² pro vi. equis ad tres
 caretas, sed quedam sunt cor-
 rigenda.
 i. par de traycis, odde, pro caretæ.
 iii. carteropis. iii. teyingeropis.
 i. vanga. ii. souffles.³
 iii. furce pro fumo.⁴
 i. sedlep.⁵ i. horsekeppe.

ITEM IN GRANGIA.

- iii. scale longe pro tassibus.
 iii. furce pro garbis. ii. redelis.

ITEM IN PISTRINA.⁶

- iiii. kymil⁷ de plumbo.
 iii. kymil de ligno.
 xiii. fatys⁸ et tubbis. iii. soos.⁹
 ii. plumba¹⁰ in fornace.
 i. taptrous de plumbo.
 ii. skelletrays. i. boket ferre ligatum.

ITEM IN GRANARIO.

- x. sacci. ii. wynewe cloyes.
 ii. crebre. iii. corbellæ portabiles.
 i. busellum de ligno. iii. ventilabra.
 i. byngelep. i. ventilabrum pro
 brassio.

- 20 little pigs.
 3 score sheep delivered to Henry
 Atland by a tally.
 80 goslings. 18 fowls.
 12 hens. 2 cocks.
 20 ducks and drakes young and old.

ALSO IN THE CART-SHED.

- 3 iron-bound carts, with their co-
 verings and ladders.
 2 ploughs with gear complete.
 2 harrows. 1 barrow.

ALSO IN THE STABLE.

- Complete harness for six horses to
 three carts, but some of them
 want mending.
 1 pair of odd traces for the cart.
 3 cart ropes. 3 binding ropes.
 1 spade. 2 suffle bags.
 3 forks for manure.
 1 seed basket. 1 horse-skep.

ALSO IN THE BARN.

- 3 long ladders for the stacks.
 3 forks for sheaves. 2 riddles.

ALSO IN THE BAKE-HOUSE.

- 4 coolers of metal.
 4 coolers of wood.
 13 vats and tubs. 3 soes.
 2 metal boilers in the furnace.
 1 leaden tap-trough.
 2 pails. 1 iron-bound bucket.

ALSO IN THE GRANARY.

- 10 sacks. 2 winnowing cloths.
 2 sieves. 3 portable chaff-baskets.
 1 wooden bushel. 4 corn fans.
 1 bin-basket. 1 fan for malt.

¹ Tallia—a piece of wood on which the numbers are scored by notch-
 ing.—*Bailey*.

² Felleratæ, from phalaræ, harness.—*Ainsworth's Dict.*

³ Souffles—saddle bags, so called up to a recent period by pedlars, &c.

⁴ Fumo is here used for fimo.

⁵ Lep—basket.—*Anglo Saxon: Forby's Dict.*

⁶ Pistrina, probably used also as a brew-house.

⁷ Kymil, kimeling, a cooler, or keeler.—*Bailey's Dict.*, and *Forby* in
Archæologia, xxi, 278.

⁸ Fat, the old spelling for vat.—See Isaiah, lxiii, 2; and Mark, xii, 1.

⁹ Soo, a large tub with two ears, and carried on a pole.—*Hallivell's Dict.*

¹⁰ Plumbum, here used for iron, perhaps a ladle, or "catachresis," for
 melting.—See *Fynchal Inventories*.

ITEM IN COQUINA.

- vi. patelle enee quarum una est apud Barton.
- vi. olle enee quarum una est ap. Thorpe.
- iii. possenets. i. chauffour.
- ii. tripedia. ii. mortaria.
- i. fruyngpatella de ferro.
- i. grate. i. gredillie.
- i. magnus cultellus pro dressing.
- i. hache. i. boket ferreligatum.
- i. mortarium eree cum i. pestel de ferro.

ITEM IN CAPELLA.

- i. calix. i. missale.
- i. antiphena.¹ i. graduale.²
- ii. vestimenta. iv. manuturgia pro altari.
- ii. tonicellis.³ i. capa.⁴
- i. chesibulum.⁵ ii. psalteria.

ITEM IN AULA.

- i. doser.⁶ vi. quarelle.
- iii. mense. i. mensa dormiens.
- ii. paria trostellorum. iii. lavatoria.
- vi. pelvee. iii. aundhyrns.⁷
- i. ignitegium de ferro.⁸ ii. paria tongis.
- iii. cathedra.

ITEM IN SPENSA.

- xvi. cocleares argenti.
- iii. pecie argenti, unde una habet coopertorium argenteum.
- i. coupe argenti, scilicet est deauratus.
- ii. mazeris. xxiii. platers de puttre.
- xxiv. disci de eadem. xxiv. sauseria de eadem.
- ii. charjours de eadem. ii. salers.
- vi. mappe. vii. savenape.
- xii. manuturgia. iii. canewacia pro aula.

ALSO IN THE KITCHEN.

- 6 brass dishes, of which one is at Barton.
- 6 brass pots, of which one is at Thorpe.
- 3 little pots. 1 chafing dish.
- 2 three-legged stools. 2 mortars.
- 1 iron frying pan.
- 1 grate. 1 griddle, or grid-iron.
- 1 great knife for dressing.
- 1 hatchet. 1 iron-bound bucket.
- 1 brass mortar with an iron pestle.

ALSO IN THE CHAPEL.

- 1 cup. 1 missal.
- 1 antiphoner. 1 gradual.
- 2 vestments. 4 napkins for the altar.
- 2 tonicells. 1 cope.
- 1 chesibule. 2 psalters.

ALSO IN THE HALL.

- 1 hanging. 6 arrows (for the cross-bow.)
- 4 tables. 1 sleeping bench.
- 2 pair of trestles. 3 washing basins.
- 6 ewers. 4 hearth-irons.
- 1 iron fire-cover. 2 pair of tongs.
- 3 chairs.

ALSO IN THE PANTRY.

- 16 silver spoons.
- 3 pieces of plate, of which one has a silver lid.
- 1 cup of silver, which moreover is gilt.
- 2 maple bowls. 23 pewter plates.
- 24 dishes of the same. 24 soup plates of the same.
- 2 pewter large dishes. 2 salt cellars.
- 6 napkins. 7 table cloths.
- 12 towels. 3 canvas cloths for the hall.

¹ Antiphoner, a choral service book, the voices alternating.—*Halliwell*.

² Gradual, another service book.—*Bailey*.

³ Tonicells, from tunicella, a robe for the sub-deacon.—*Du Cange*.

⁴ Cope, another robe.

⁵ Chesible, a short robe for the priest.

⁶ Doser, or docer, hanging or curtain.—*Halliwell*.

⁷ Andirons, for supporting the wood,—dogs.

⁸ Fire-cover, couvre-feu in French, whence *curfew*, to put out the fire, according to the curfew law of William I.

iv. barelle. i. arca pro pane.
 ii. cultelli in uno vaso pro mensâ domini.

ITEM IN CAMERA DOMINI.

xi. tapetes. vii. coverlits pro do-
 ceteris.
 xxvii. lintheanima. ii. lecti de pen-
 narum.

vi. canewacia. iii. quilts.
 ii. long pillewys. v. curt pillewys.
 iii. aketones.¹ ii. bachenets.²
 i. hauburgium. v. haste.
 iii. mantelle. iii. coffris.³
 iii. coffris trussuris. ii. parve arce.
 iii. forceria. ii. gissarmis.
 i. house de ray.⁴

ITEM IN LARDARIO.

i. archa pro carne.
 i. alveolum pro carne.
 ii. barelli stantes pro sale.
 i. blower de enea.⁵ ii. pondera.
 i. hamerus. i. par pinsonis.
 i. gladium. i. cultellus longus.
 i. arca.⁶ xxxiii. segette.

4 barrels. 1 bread chest.
 4 knives in a box for the lord's
 table.

ALSO IN THE LORD'S CHAMBER.

11 pieces of tapestry. 7 coverlets
 for the hangings.
 27 sheets. 2 feather beds.

6 canvas cloths. 3 quilts.
 2 bolsters. 5 pillows.
 3 hacquetons. 2 bascinets.
 1 hauberk. 5 spears.
 3 cloaks. 4 chests.
 3 packing chests. 2 little boxes.
 3 cabinets. 2 battle-axes.
 1 striped mantle or rug.

ALSO IN THE LARDER.

1 chest for meat.
 1 small meat pot.
 2 upright salt barrels.
 1 skimmer of brass. 2 weights.
 1 hammer. 1 pair of pincers.
 1 cleaver. 1 long knife.
 1 bow. 33 arrows.

Note.—The Barton and Thorpe portions of this Inventory contain only two words which are not found in the above, viz. :—

v. xx. oves⁷ matrices.
 i. busellum de stramine.

5 score mother ewes.
 1 bushel basket.

¹ Hacquetons were quilted jackets worn under the armour.—*Halliwell*.

² Bascinet were helmet caps.

³ Coffris. These are still called coffers by the peasantry.

⁴ House de ray. It is difficult to understand exactly what is meant by this, but according to Halliwell it is a "short coarse mantle for wet weather."

⁵ Skimmer of brass. According to Bailey, *blow-milk* is *skimmed* milk, but what *blower* originally signifies I cannot find. In an old Inventory of Sir John Fastolf occurs this: "Item two skymers of brasse."—See *Archæol.*, xxi, p. 278.

⁶ Arca, sometimes used for *arcus* by inferior writers.—*Carpentier*.

⁷ Oves, ewes. In Norfolk these are called *the flock*, and no other sheep are so called. The Great Captain of our agriculture, Mr. Coke, used to say "yowes," and rightly, thus derived, "oves," "owes," "yowes." Fr. "eaux."

tapeť. vij. coflit p doceer. xxvij. lintheam. vj. canewac. iij. quilt. ij. lect de penñ. ij. long pillewys. v. curť pillewys. iij. aketon. ij. bachen3. j. hauburg. v. haste. iij. mantelt. iij. coffris. iij. coffert trussuř. ij. pue arce. iij. forceř. ij. gissarmis. j. house de ray. Iťm in lardař. j. arcħa p carñ. j. alueolum p carñ. ij. barett stant p sale. j. blower de enea. ij. ponder. j. ham. j. pa pinsonis. j. glad. j. cultett long. j. arca. xxxiij. seget.

Berton.

De stauro. iij. stott. ij. bou trtant. xij. vac. j. tauř. xiiij. xiiij. multon libat Petro Broñ p j. tařt. vj. anč t j. gandr. iij. anat t j. drke. iij. gallie t j. gařt. xiiij. capon. Iť in carřař. j. carca ferřlig cū toť fellerat. j. caruē cū toť appař t cū duař pař ferř caruē. ij. crť. j. barwe. j. vang. j. sofe. ij. furč p fuñ. Iť in grng. j. furč p garb. j. sedlep. ij. byngelepis. ij. ventit. j. corbett portab. j. bussett de ligno.

Thorpe.

De stauro. iij. juvñ. ij. bou trťť. v. of matrič. iij. v. multon. liberat Rodlond p j. tařt. v. anč. t j. gandr. vj. gallie. t j. gařt. x. capon. Iť in carřař. j. carca ferřligat cū tot. fallert. j. carač cū toť appař. ij. pař ferř caruē. ij. crť. j. barwe. j. vang. j. sofe. ij. furč p fuñ. Iť in grng. j. furč p garb. j. sedlep. j. schat. ij. redelys. ij. ventit. j. corbet portab. j. seuee. j. bussett de strmie.

3. The last TESTAMENT of John de Fyncham, son and heir to the preceding John, and grandson of Adam, is dated October 2nd (the sixth of the Nones of October), 1415, and proved at Wereham (most probably at the Archdeacon's Visitation), October 15th, 1415.

In Dei nomine. Amen. Ego Johannis de Fyncham sane mentis et bone memorie sexto nonarum Octobris anno domini millesimo CCCC quinto decimo condo testamentum meum in hunc modum. In primis lego animam meam Deo omnipotenti et beate Marie semper virgini matri sue; et corpus meum sepeliendum in ecclesiâ sancti Martini de Fyncham.—Item lego Christiane filie mee et conventui de Crabous v marcas.—Item lego Margarete filie mee xiii' iv^d.—Item lego Johanni Wystede *meam brefiam jupam*¹ et unum quarterium ordeï. Et quicquid residuum honorum meorum fuerit do et lego executoribus meis, ut disponendum pro animâ meâ prout eis melius fuerit visum peragendum. Et constituo et ordino Simeonem filium meum et Johannem Gyffe perpetuum vicarium ecclesie de Fyncham executores meos ad perficiendum præsens testamentum. Datum apud Fyncham die et anno supradictis. Probatum fuit apud Wyrham XV die Oct. anno MCCCCXV.—*At Stow.*

4. The WILL of Simon de Fyncham, son and heir to the preceding, is written in English, and separate from his Testament, which is in Latin. The former disposes of the real, the latter of the personal property, according to the custom of the time. It is dated October 10th, 31 Henry VI (1452).

This is the last will of me Simeon Fyncham of Fyncham in the counte of Norff: Gentilman. First I will that alle my feoffees to myn use in all my londys and tenementes in the

¹ Jupam—*jupon*, the pourpoint or doublet. It was generally of silk or velvet, and was worn over the armour, being frequently emblazoned with the arms of the owner.—*Halliwel*. "*Brefiam*" is a curious variation of spelling for "*brevem*." In Mr. Dawson Turner's *Blomefield Illustrated*, this expression, "*brefiam jupam*," is erroneously copied "*gresiam rupam*."—*Br. Mus. Add. MSS.*, 28,030.

seid Counte after my decesse, and of Elizabeth my wyfe, make estat to John my sone, and to his heres, or to sweche persones as he shall name to be enfeofed to his use. And in kas the seid John deye levynge me the seid Symeon, thanne I will that my seid feoffees make estat to John the sone of the seid John, in lyke wise as thei shoulde have done to his fadre. And if the seid John the son overlive not his seid fadre, thanne they shall make estat to Thomas brodyr of the seid John the son, in lyke wise as thei shoulde have don to John the Fadyr: and the lyke estat to him that ovyrleve othir til hese issue male be dispended. And if the seid John my sone deye, none issue male komyng of hym, thanne I will that if he have on issue female, and no more, the seid feoffes kepe the seid londys til thei have reryd CC marke, wech CC marke I will the seid issue female have to here maryage. And if ii females, thanne thei to have eche of hem Cⁱⁱ. And after this don, thanne my seid feoffes shalle demene hem in estate to Laurence my sone, and to hese issue male, if any kome of hym, as thei shoulde have done to the seid John my sone, and to his issue male if they had levyd. And if it fortune the seide Laurence to deye withowte issue male—thanne the same to William my sone &c—thanne to Nicholas &c. And if it fortune all my seide sonnes to deye, none issue male komyng of hem, thanne, after the issue female payed and content, that thei selle alle the seid londys &c, and the money reseyyed therefore be disposed for the sowles of me and my wyfe and oure seid issue, and of all oure ancestres and frendes, in swech wise as kan be thought to there discretion, the seid sowles lengest to be had in preyer and remembraunce. In witness of wech thyngs &c. Geven the X day of Octobr the yere of the regne of Kyng Harry the sexte after the Conquest the XXXI (1452).—*At Stow.*

5. The last TESTAMENT of Simon de Fyncham is dated November 25th, 14—, and proved the 17th of March, 1458.

In Dei nomine. Amen. Vicesimo quinto die mensis Novembris anno domini millesimo CCCC. Ego Symeon

Fyncham de Fyncham sane mentis &c. Inprimis commendo animam meam Deo omnipotenti beate Marie virgini et omnibus sanctis ejus; corpusque meum sepeliendum in ecclesiâ sancti Martini predictâ.—Item lego summo altari ejusdem ecclesie vi' viii^d.—Item lego fabrice campanilis ejusdem ecclesie vii' vi' viii^d, solvenda in septem annis jam proxime sequentibus per equales portiones.—Item lego Elizabethhe uxori mee omnia utensilia et totum apparatus camere mee, una cum omnibus crateris et coclearibus meis argenteis.—Residuum do et lego executoribus meis, ad debita mea solvenda, et eleemosinas et alia opera caritativa pro animâ meâ, et animabus ipsorum quibus teneor, distribuendum prout eisdem melius ac magis Deo placabile videbitur fore faciendum. Hujus testamenti executores meos ordino Elizabetham uxorem meam et Johannem filium meum. Datum die et anno supradictis. Probatum apud Norvicum &c, decimo septimo die Marcii anno millesimo CCCCLVIII.—*At Stow.*

6. The WILL of John Fyncham, son and heir to Simon, is dated March 10th, 1494, and was proved at Lambeth, February 7th, 1496. It is very long, and the high charges at Doctors' Commons are an effective bar to copying long wills. Here is about half of it.

In the name of Almighty God, Fader, Sone, and Holy Gost, the blessed Trinite, I John Fyncham the sone of Simeon Fyncham sumetyme of Fyncham &c, the Xth day of the moneth of March, the yere of our Lord God 1494 &c, ordeigne and make for my last will in the maner and forme hereafter ensuyng. First I pray exhort and require all my feoffees to myne use in and of my maner of Depdale, in the counte of Norff, that they suffre all myne executors to occupie alle my said maner, with all the appurtenances profites and commoditees of the same, enstored with all my cataill of shepe, that is to say, v^e moder shepe there left for my stoore

of the said maner, to pay all my debts, and to the performyng of alle my legacies and bequests in my testament ordeyned and specified. And over that, my said feoffees to suffre my said executours to take alle other profittes and issues of the said maner, excepte all such lands as lyegh and be within the towne and feld of Brancastre and Depdale, on the weste side of Downgate or Dalegate, for to finde and susteyne an honest and well disposed prest seculer, that shall yerely and daily, if sikeness or other resonable causes lette not him, to singe or to say masse and all other Divine service, as *placebo dirige* and *commendacionem*, as apperteneth to an annuell¹ preste for to do. And in his masse to remembre and pray for the soules of me and Beatrice late my wife, and the soules of my fader Symeon Fyncham and Elizabeth his wife, my moder, and for all my good benefactours and good doers in generall, &c. Whiche preste for to say the said masse &c, I assigne my brother Sir Nicholas Fyncham, if it may please him to take it uppon him, afore any other preste, taking yerely for his salarye vi marcs and his boord, so that he be content to goo to bord with my sonne *thelder John*, as he hath doon to for this tyme. The said salarye to be paid atte ii tymes of the yere, atte the fest of the Nativite of Saint John Baptiste, and of our Lord Jesu Criste, by evin porcions &c, first out of my maner of Depdale for iii or iv yeres, and thenne of alle myne other maners and landes, except such as I have assigned to my sonne *yonger John* by this my last will. And the said Sir Nicholas shall have the said service and chauntry if it may plese him during his lief &c; and shall singe and say his masse &c, in the parish church of Saint Martyn, or in the chapell of our Ladye *within my maner of Fyncham*. Provided alway that onys in every weke his masse shall be of *requiem*, yf it be not contrary to the ordinance and rawle of holy chirch. Provided alway that yf Sir Nicholas shall refuse, or by any long and contynuell sikeness or unwiley² age may not do the said service, thenne that my heires &c, name another honest prest &c, to do such service in the parish chirch of Saint Marten, or els in tyme of necessite in the chapell of oure lady *being*

¹ Annuell, or annual, so called because a priest was usually appointed by will to say mass one whole year for a deceased person, and hence also his stipend was termed "annuala."—*Ash's Dictionary*.

² "Unwiley," or unwilly,—unfavorable; as willy—favorable.—*Halliwel's Dict.*

edified in my maner¹ of Fyncham aforesaid &c.--in tyme of necessitie, whanne any woman or women &c, may not labor to go to the parish church, or in tyme of sickeness or trowbels or fowle wedir, or any other convenient tyme. And as oft as it shall fortune that the said chauntry by death or by unwiley age or mysgovnance of the prest to falle voyde, thenne that another convenient preste be named &c.—Item that myne heires for the tyme being shall have full power to putt in and putt oute any preste not of good conversacion and disposition.—Item I will that myne heires indevore them, that the said preste and chauntry be contynued and kept in perpetuite, as they will answer to fore God, atte the day of Judgement, &c. &c.—Prerogative Court, D. C., London.

7. The last TESTAMENT of the above-mentioned John Fyncham is in Latin, and of the same date as his Will. Besides a number of legacies and bequests to certain churches, the poor, &c., &c., it contains the following:—

*Filialis meis William Batchcroft Johanni Fyncham et Thome Fyncham cuique vi. viii^a.—Item filialo Johanni librum meum veterum statutorum.—Residuum do et lego Johanni Fyncham *seniori filio meo*, Johanni *filio juniore*, magistro Symeon Fyncham, et Gulielmo Batchcroft, &c.—Proved with the Will as above.—London, D. C.*

8. The WILL of John Fyncham (*the elder John*), son and heir to the preceding, is dated April 6th, 1499; and proved June 1st, 1499. It is much defaced by time, and in many parts quite illegible.

In the name of Almighty God the fadyr the son and Holy Gost the blessed Trinite, and owyr Lady sent Mary, and all

¹ "Maner" here means the *Manor House*. These chapels could only be erected by license of the Bishop, with the consent of the Rector or Vicar, &c.—See *Bl.*, xi, 18.

the holy company of hevyn, I John Fyncham the son of John Fyncham of Fyncham, the XVIth day of Aprill, the yere of ower Lord MCCCCLXXXIX, and the XVI yere of the reynngn of King Herry the VII King of Ingelond, ordeyn and make my last will in the maner and forme here ensuwyng. First I pray exorte and requir alle my feoffees in my londs wher so ever they lye in the counte of Norff: to deliver estate according to this my last will. Fyrst I geive and graunte to Jane my wyffe alle my maneris londs &c, wythine the towne of Fyncham &c, upon this condycion that she do noo voluntary wast in the howsys of the maneris, nor fell down noo gret wode, but for reparacion of the seid howsys &c.—[Then as to the manors, lands, &c, in Hunworth, Stody, Barton, &c.] Item I will requir and exorte alle my feoffees to suffyr myn executors to take alle issues and profits of my maner in Depdale, with vi^s shep there left for store &c, for the mariage of my seid dowgthr Margaret; and after that performed, than I wille that my son John have the saide maner of Depdale, to have and to holde to hym hese heyres and assigns for evirmore. And if it happyn my seid sone John for to dye withine age without heyr male, or if it happyn my seid sone John for to sell my seid maner of Depdale, than my *brother John* Fyncham shall have the preferment or the bying thereof, as in the last will of my fadyr more pleynly apperith, &c. &c.
—*At Stow.*

9. The last TESTAMENT of the said elder John. Date and probate the same as the Will. They are coupled together, and bear the seal of John Moreton, Archbishop of Canterbury.

In Dei nomine, &c. Ego Johannes Fyncham filius Johannis Fyncham filii Symeonis Fyncham condo testamentum meum &c. Inprimis lego animam meam &c.—Item ecclesie cathedrali Norwycensis ii^r. Item reparacioni ecclesie sancti Martini de Fyncham xiii^r iv^d. Item summo

altari ejusdem pro decimis oblitis viⁱ viii^d. Item meum optimum animale pro mortuario meo. Item reparacioni campanile ecclesie sancti Michaelis de Fyncham xiiiⁱ iv^d. Item cuilibet ecclesiis de Depedale et Hundworth iiiⁱ iv^d. Item Margarete filie mee centum libras &c. Residuum Johanne uxori mee, ad debita mea persolvenda, injuria mea restituenda, et ad sustentacionem ipsius Johanne ac liberorum nostrorum, exceptis omnibus ornamentis capelle, quibus pater meus mihi assignavit et legavit, sub condicionem quod predicta ornamenta remanent &c. Executores hujus testamenti mei ordino facio et constituo Johannam uxorem meam, Johannem fratrem meum, Henricum Tey militem &c &c.—*At Stow.*

10. The WILL and TESTAMENT combined of John Fyncham, son and heir of the preceding, is dated September 11th, 32 Henry VIII (1540). It was found, without date of probate, recited in a Post Mortem Inquisition taken after his death at Norwich Castle, September 19th, 1541.

I John Fyncham of Fyncham Esquier the XI day of September in the yere of oure Lord God a thousand fyve hundred and fortie, and in the XXXII yere of the reign of our sovereign lorde Kyng Henrie the eight, beyng of good mind and remembrance, make my testament and last will in this wise, revokyng and adnullyng alle other willes &c.—Firste I commende my soule &c.—and my body to be buried in the church of Saynt Martyn on the south side of my father, and I giff and bequethe to the vicar of the same church in recompens for my tithis negligently forgotten viⁱ viii^d.—and to the reparacion of the same church of Saynt Martyn in Fyncham iiiⁱ viⁱ viii^d.—also to the parson of Saynt Michell viⁱ viii^d.—and to the reperacion of the same church of Saynt Michell xlⁱ.—Item to every parson or vicar of alle such townes whereyn I have lond for tithe forgotten xii^d.—Item I will that my most interlie beloved wiff Ele shall have the keypyng usyng and occupacion of alle my chapell stuff, as well chales¹ bokes

¹ Chales, for chalices, used in a general sense for the sacramental plate.

vestymentes &c, during hur liff, and after hur dececeas [*sic*] then my sone Thomas &c.—Item I will that my said wiff &c, shall fynde an honest preest to say masse and pray devoutly for my sowle, and alle my ancettours sowles, according to the will of John Fyncham my graunt-father.—Item I giff to my brother Skipwith my best gowne and my best dowbelett; and I giff to Ele Skipwith his doughter all such monye as he owith me, whiche is aboute xl'.—Item I will that myne executours shall pay or do to be payde to my sister Skipwith, during the terme of vii yeres &c, at too termes in the yere, that is to say at Michelmas and Estern, at iche one of the same festivals x'.—Item I giff to the one of my god childern beyng a gentilmans child vi' viii^d, and to iche one of my other god childern, John Copsey except, xx^d, and to the same John Copsey iii' iiiii^d.—Item to my cosyn Fyncham of Westwynch my blak chamlett gowne furred, and to my cosyn Thomas Fyncham of Well my blak gowne furred with conye.—Item I giff to Sir John my preste vi' viii^d. Item to Thomas Complyn my servaunt iiiⁱⁱ whiche I lent hym. Item to John Bacon my servaunt xl'. Item to Richard Bacon xx'. Item to William Parker vi' viii^d. Item to Ann Calybutt and Thomasyn Fyncham, beyng now childern within my hous, to iche one of them vi' viii^d. Item to every one of my women servaunts one quarter wagis. Item I giff unto my said wiff alle my goodes cattals plate money dettes corne &c, upon this condicion, that she pay my dettes, restore my wrongs &c, and delyver unto Thomas my sone sevyng hundred good ewes, when he come to his age of xxi yeres &c, and also tenne kyne and a bulle. And I will that she shall pay unto Ele my doughter too hundred marks of good and lawful monye of Inglond, whan she shall come to the age of xxi yeres, in full recompens for alle such shepe as I havyn gyvyn hur before this day &c. and if my childern die before the age of xxi yeris, then I will that my wiff have the said bequest to herself, to this intent, to bestowe it in dedes of charitie amongst my kynsfolk and servaunts and pore folk, to pray for our sowles and alle benefactours sowles, by hur discrecion. Item I giff to the said Ele my wiff alle my londes and pastures in Bowton &c. Also where before thys tyme by my dede I have graunted unto Ele my doughter an annuell rente of xxⁱⁱ &c —Also I will that my said wiff shall have two partes of the maner of Baynard halle in Fyncham in three parts divydid, that is to say the sight or mansion of the said maner,

lx acres in Southowe, a close in North field, a libertie of fouldcourse for cccc shepe &c.—All the residue of alle my goodes cattalls &c, I giff to the said Ele my wiff, whom I make and ordeyn my sole executrix &c, and Sir John Spelman Kt supervyser &c.—Witness William Skipwith and others.—*Public Record Office, London.*

11. The WILL and TESTAMENT of Thomas Fyncham, son of the preceding John, is very long, and much injured by the effects of time. It is dated March 1st, 1550, and was proved December 21st, 1551, in the Consistory Court of the Bishop of Norwich, where it is preserved. After a very incoherent introduction, in which there is something about Sodom and Gomorrha, he disposes of his real estate to his wife and her assigns for certain family uses, William his son and heir being then an infant. It consists, besides the Fincham property, of manors or lands in Brancaster, Burnham Deepdale, Burnham Norton, Burnham Sutton, and 18 other parishes mentioned. Then comes the Testament, by which he bequeaths—

To the poor folke of Fyncham xl shillings. item to my beloved wyffe all the stuffe and utensils in my house in Fyncham and in Burnham Depedale. item, to the common boxe in Fyncham vi^{li} viiiⁱ iv^d. item, to my son William 500 good mother ewes at his age of xxi yeres, all the stuffe and utensils in the chamber above the chapell. . . . item, to Ann Fyncham my doughter 300 sheepe 20 kene and a hundred marks on the day of her maridg. Item, to my littell cosyn George Walker vi^{li} viiiⁱ iv^d. Item, to my cosyn Fyncham of West Wynce my cloth night gowne furred with conye [rabbit skin],¹ and to Mr. Yelverton my father-in-law my bay gelding, &c. &c.—*Bishop's Registry, Norwich.*

¹ "Their skins," says Fuller, "were formerly much used, when furs were in fashion; till of late our citizens have laid down their grave gownes, and took up their light cloaks, men generally disliking all habits, though emblems of honor, if also badges of age."—*Fuller's Worthies*, vol. ii, p. 124.

The Will of William Fyncham, son and heir of the preceding Thomas, and the last occupant in the family of Fincham Hall, has not been found. Most probably he never made one, having sold his estate in 1572 as a young man, and left the village. He was dead in 1586.

The foregoing, it may be seen, are, with one single omission only, (and there we have the Inventory of his goods and chattels,) a perfect series of the Wills and Testaments of the heads of successive generations of this family, from 1337 to 1551, a period of more than 200 years, immediately preceding the Reformation. Such a series must surely be rare and very difficult to procure. A like selection to a certain extent, in a way of instructive contrast, might be made from the Wills of the same family subsequently. Two, however, are all that I have thought it necessary to procure copies of, and will be amply sufficient for our purpose, which, as before hinted, is partly at least to shew from what gross and absurd superstitions the Church was now purged, and what is the true and only foundation of a Christian's hope, in that departure when he can "carry nothing away with him." They will be quoted only to the extent necessary to this end.

1. In the Will of EDWARD FINCHAM, of Outwell, dated February 1st, 1630, is as follows:—

In the name of God, Amen. The first daie of Februarie in the yeare of our Lord God, one thousand six hundred and thirtie, I Edward Fincham of Outwell, within the Isle of Ely, in the Countie of Cambridge, Esquier, considering with mysele that it is appointed to all men to dye, and that the tyme

of death is uncertaine, and being desirous to settle and dispose of such parte of mine estate wherewith God hath blessed me, as remaineth undisposed by anie acte of mine yet executed, doe in my perfect memorie (thanckes be unto God) ordaine make and declare this my last Will and Testament in manner and forme followinge. First I render and give againe unto Almightye God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Comforter, my whole selfe soule and bodye, hoping through the mirritts of Jesus Christe his dearlie beloved sonne, and my mercifull Saviour, to be saved, and after this life ended to enjoy life everlasting,—and my bodie to be buried at the discretion of mine executors.—*Proved in D. C., July 1, 1631.*

2. In the Will of JOHN FINCHAM, of Outwell, dated March 19th, 1708-9, is as follows :—

In the name of God, Amen. I John Fincham of Outwell, in the Isle of Ely, and County of Cambridge, Esquire, being through the great mercie of God in perfect health and memorey, doe hereby revoake and annull all former and other Wills by me made, and doe make this my last Will and Testament in manner and forme following. First, I doe humbly commend my soul into the hands of Almighty God, my merciful Creator, assuredly hoping through his infinite mercie and goodness, and the passion death merits and mediation of his only son our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to be made partaker of everlasting life and eternal happiness; in order to which I most humbly begg of the Holy Ghost our Comforter and Sanctifyer, that he would please to fill my heart with his Gifts and Graces, that I may spend the remaining part of my time that it might please my gracious God to give me leave to live in this transitory world to the glory and honour of the holy blessed and undivided Trinity, three sacred persons and one God, to whome be all honor and glory and praise both now and for evermore. As to my Body I desire it may be Christianly and decently interred in my Chappell adjoine to the parish church of Outwell aforesaid, built and dedicated by my Ancestors, &c. &c.—*Proved in D. C., May 8th, 1709.*

CHAPTER XIX.

OBSERVATIONS AND REFLECTIONS ON GENERAL LOCAL AND PAROCHIAL INSTITUTIONS.

There are many other topics which might have been introduced to extend this outline of our village history, and almost every preceding chapter might have been considerably expanded by the introduction of more detail and disquisition. We might have travelled all through the Deanery by virtue of its name to bring in large and fresh contributions. The science of botany, for example, in itself both recreative and practically instructive, might fairly have been pressed into our service, for its quota of information, and a moral teaching which possesses many natural inherent charms,

“ Fox-glove and night-shade side by side,

“ Emblems of *punishment* and *pride*.”—*Lady of the Lake*.

And thus I am reminded again of the incompleteness of my work. But still I think my readers will be satisfied, at least with the amount and variety of matter introduced to their notice, in their appreciation of the Greek saying, “ A great book is a great nuisance.” I would only now desire to make a few reflections and remarks on some of those integral parts of our parochial system, which in the foregoing pages have occupied our attention as matters of fact, and which have their application, more or less important, to every parish in the land.

1. First, in regard to the family, who for five long centuries held the position of country squire or gentleman (*armiger vel generosus*) in this place, with unquestionable benefit to all around them. I may call that position the domestic Institution of a Resident Gentry. The Finchams were a fine example of it in past times. I contemplate their history with the deepest interest, perhaps with a too partial eye. Not many, I suspect, among the families of Norfolk can lay claim to so lengthened a line of honorable succession, and unbroken residence upon the domains of their ancestors ;—not many whose family and fortunes suffered so little, amidst the vicissitudes and dangers of the times through which they passed. Of their *life*, I have discovered nothing which is inconsistent with blamelessness and honour ;—of their *religion*, and its unsoundness, only what was incident to the times in which they lived ;—of their *habitation*, nothing to be regretted more than its conversion from the lord's mansion and homestead to the tenant's farm-house and yard ;—and of their ancient *name*, no blot to make its most virtuous holder ashamed of it. May their unrecorded faults be left behind them in the grave !

But what is the lesson which these thoughts suggest ? They suggest to my mind the very great importance of the residence, as far as may be, of country gentlemen upon their estates. If—as having a considerable stake in the country—the representatives of good families—who, from descent, education, revenue, and position, ought to take a lead, to guide opinion, to be the foremost promoters of improvements—they are nevertheless, from whatever cause, unknown, and personally without either credit or influence, how great is the loss to the country and the people ! and how great the injustice that is done to both ! But, assuming that a country gentleman is a man of generous and open-hearted sentiments—ready to promote all real improve-

ments—"given to hospitality"—"a lover of good works"—and I will add, in the language of the Church, "religiously and devoutly disposed,"—what a blessing to the parish, to the neighbourhood, to the country! Who will grudge him his estate? who will refuse him a cheer? what minister of righteousness and peace but will "wish him good luck in the name "of the Lord"?

But I said, "residence as far as may be." It is not possible, we know, at all times and in all places. We would rather prefer to have the man than his guinea,—where indeed it is true that

"The man's the gowd, for a' that";

for the one will surely come with the other,—but if the landlord must be absent, the collector is sure to come, and a word to him on rent days, or a stroke of the pen without trouble on any other day, may in some degree make compensation. In some country places this is well and handsomely done.

Candour, however, gently whispers in our ear that there is a reciprocity of duty;—all in the parish, from the clergyman to the lowest pauper, owe respect to educated rank and talent and exalted character. "Render therefore to all their dues." If otherwise—if our Esquires be not honoured and supported—they will not have much pleasure in their rural possessions, and will retreat to the personal enjoyment of other attractions. To help to a right appreciation of the consequences of a forced absenteeism, we may turn to the list of honorable names which grace the first pages of this book, and for a moment imagine every Hall or House there mentioned to be *empty*.

2. I would next make reference to some of those religious and charitable Institutions of our Church, which have been formed for the extension of Christ's kingdom both at home and abroad, and which are among the signs of her vitality, and have strong claims on all her members. The wisdom of experience has long since decided that the most effective as well as the most economical course to pursue, in benefiting the greatest number to the greatest extent, is by the *association* of persons so disposed into a compact body, for united and powerful action, on the principle that the body itself can always carry out the office of each member more extensively and completely than such member of itself could do. The system does not interfere with private charity. It is supplementary to it. I do not think that our parishioners in general have any idea of the number of these Institutions, nor consequently of their philanthropic and comprehensive objects. I have been often surprised to find how little they are understood, even after years of connection with the parish. Nor is it fully known, I am sure, to what great extent they are pressed upon the attention of the clergy. I would wish, then, to use this opportunity of awakening the attention of my own parishioners at least, and of others if they will give me leave to do so, (and I hope they will not be alarmed,) to the very great importance of the subject, viz., the maintenance and support of these instrumental means employed by the Church in the exercise of her great mission, the temporal and everlasting welfare of the people. Combining the local with the parent Institution, and remarking only on the latter, I would mention :—

(1.) *The Fincham Deanery District Committee of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.*—This society was formed in the year 1698, and is the oldest Bible society in England. From it we obtain our Bibles, Prayer

Books, School Books, and Tracts; at a price which admits of no profit, and in many instances less than actual cost. From the large and handsome folio on the reading desk at church, down to the numerous instructive little tracts in the village library at the Rectory, we have evidences of the great value of this society. And so throughout the whole country, and in the colonies abroad. Its issues in 1861 were the enormous aggregate of six millions six hundred and thirty four thousand and seventy three !

Is it possible to over-rate the usefulness of such an institution, and the blessings which it is calculated to convey to every corner of her Majesty's dominions ?

The Committee hold their meetings at the house of Mr. Daniell, bookseller, Downham ; where also is the dépôt for books. And the Secretary is the Rev. E. J. Howman, Rector of Bexwell.

(2.) *The Fincham Deanery Association in connection with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.*

—This society also is a venerable institution of the Church, dating from the year 1701, and its first object is the care of our emigrated countrymen in the colonies. When we think of the trying lot of a village family, compelled to leave their native home, with all its happy privileges, but which perhaps they had not before felt the value of, and to settle amongst strangers in a strange land, where they do not exist, we must see at once the blessing that exists in such a society as this, which labours to keep before them the "friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Let not the words "foreign parts" tend to cool our kindling love ; it is our late nearest neighbour whom the chill blasts of poverty have separated from us for ever. It contributes to the support of about 422 missionaries, and about 700 other teachers.

The Secretary and Treasurer is the Rev. W. H. Stokes, Rector of Denver.

(3.) *The Fincham Deanery and Parochial Association of the Church Missionary Society.*

—This is an institution strictly in harmony with the principles and first duty of a Christian. The gospel must be preached to the heathen of *all nations*, and "how shall they hear without a preacher ? and how shall "they preach except they be sent ?" And who are to send

them, if wealthy and Christian England ought not? The society was established in the year 1801, and has been blessed to a very great extent. It has 147 stations, and supports 266 ordained missionaries, and several hundreds of other teachers.

The local Assistant Secretary is Mr. Wm. Nurse, Fincham.

(4.) *The Fincham Branch Association of the British and Foreign Bible Society.*—This society was founded in 1804. Half its members are of the Church of England, the rest of other denominations. Its great and Christian object is the circulation of the Holy Scriptures in all lands. It has already done so to a great extent, through the medium of 163 languages or dialects; and its issues last year were 1,595,248 Bibles, or portions of the Bible.

Lady Secretary, Mrs. George Aylmer, Fincham.

(5.) *The Fincham District Committee of the National Society for the Education of the Poor in the principles of the Established Church.*—This is an institution which, out of pure gratitude for benefits received, if for no other reason, ought to have our liberal support. The National School Society was established in 1812, and has just celebrated its first jubilee anniversary. There are 11,539 schools in union with it, containing upwards of 1,187,000 children. In 1848 we received grants both from the Parent Society and from the Diocesan Branch of the same at Norwich. And several other schools in the Deanery have experienced like assistance. As the subject of education is still a somewhat controverted one, I will reserve myself for a few remarks upon it presently.

The office of Secretary and Treasurer is in myself.

(6.) *The Fincham Parochial Association in support of the Church Pastoral Aid Society.*—The absolute necessity of such an institution, if Christianity is to continue to be the religion of this land, in reality and not in name only, is apparent from one single consideration, namely, the enormous increase of the population. In the year 1801, the population of England and Wales amounted to 9,156,171; last year (1861) it had reached to 20,223,746; and it is going on at the rate of 200,000 annually. Hence in hundreds of large villages and towns, the vast increase of the people,—ten, twenty, or an hundred fold,—has long since utterly outgrown the means of

grace, and the spiritual blessings of pastoral superintendence. In 1837 the first associated effort was made by this society to supply something of this great need, and it has already done so to the extent of providing a systematic annual pastoral visitation for a population amounting to *three millions and a half*, which would otherwise be neglected.

The Secretary for the District is the Rev. W. W. Clarke, Rector of North Wootton.

These six noble institutions I have selected and placed first, as being general and parental in their character. They have all of them their local and affiliated branches, and are broad enough in their principles to comprehend in one or the other all Christians as members. But even these are not all that might be so placed. There is the valuable *Church Building Society*, with its 4365 churches, new or greatly enlarged; and the *Additional Curates Society*, with objects similar to those of the Pastoral Aid; and many others, with which I am myself unacquainted;—all testifying to the character and constitution of the Church of England, in connection with the State, as seeking earnestly and faithfully to provide for the highest interests of the people. We have, moreover, in our midst, the District Branch of the *Book-Hawking Association*; the Fincham Deanery *Lay and Clerical Association*, for tracts on social evils and their remedies; and the Fincham Branch of the *Diocesan Church Association*, for defensive purposes; of all which I can only record the names and titles.

In reference to the parish in particular, having said thus much of charitable institutions in general, I will here only mention the *educational*,—our Day, Infant, and Night Schools, now numbering respectively 90, 36, and 40 learners,—a hundred of whom are also in the Sunday School. Of the great importance of a general religious education it is not easy to speak adequately. The Night School especially—for boys, lads, and married men—originated and conducted entirely by ladies—demands the most kindly and candid consideration. An occasional visit to it would gladden and expand the hearts of their superiors. Such schools

can only be maintained by a union of Christian benevolence with zeal and labour. That in their combination of religious with secular instruction—heart and head together—they are highly beneficial,—not only to the individual taught, but to the whole community of the village,—I think is capable of clear demonstration. And I believe the same to a certain extent of the National Day School likewise.

We are all, however, aware that opinions are still very far from an agreement on this point. I will take the liberty first of stating my own views, and will then as briefly as possible notice what I have heard of those of dissentients therefrom.

In the first place, we have testimony of the most unquestionable value, that crime has much diminished in the lower classes of society. I mean here *crime* as directly punishable by law. From the increase of the population the contrary might have been expected. But judges and juries, magistrates and police, assert a decided diminution of crime, and their voice is confirmed by the actual shutting up of prisons; for example, our old well-known Walsingham Bridewell.¹ Then, again, it is an absolute fact, as stated in the Reports of the County Prisons on several occasions of late, that the great majority of criminals can neither read nor write, and numbers of them are unable to say the Lord's Prayer. Education, therefore, has nothing to do with *their* transgressions; more likely the want of it.

But I appeal with confidence to the observation of honest minds, when I assert, in the case of my own parish, and of others which I could name, and of others

¹ The statistics of the Rev. Henry Kitton, late chaplain to Walsingham Bridewell, seem to exhibit an increase of crime in the county; but his tables extend over half a century, the first thirty-five years of which were in the times of the old poor laws, when the state of the rural districts was such as I need not stay to describe. The improved character of the labouring classes, which has led to the *abolition of prisons*, dates from ten to twenty years ago.

of which I have no doubt, that within the last twenty years the conduct of the people has been more orderly—that there is less intemperance—that there are fewer instances of malicious depredation—much less profane swearing and bad language—but little habitual interruption to respectable inhabitants in the streets—the idle corner less frequented—and the church-gate group not now that rude and jeering mob, which formerly I recollect to have been the terror of modest females on their way to church. Nay, further, in spite of this dreaded education, and teaching poor boys and girls to *write*, there is even an abatement of obscene drawing and writing in public places, and of cutting names and lines and holes on the leads of church roofs, as used to be done when churches were esteemed as little better than parish lumber-houses or convenient watch-towers.

No:—the increase of crime comes from other quarters. *O tempora ! O mores !* Who can deny it? It is in the middle and upper classes of society, where the lust of avarice and love of money have led to the perpetration of enormities before unknown in their satanic refinements and colossal magnitude ;—perjured persons and trust-breakers, forgers of deeds and forgers of wills, robbers of whole incomes of the widow, and the orphan, and the aged ; libertines, adulterers, and such-like criminals,¹ compared with whom the offenders amongst our peasantry are most of them innocent.

But you admit—it will be asserted—that personal vice and follies, affecting the welfare and good order of families, abound to a greater extent than in past years. Admitted fully. “Young persons,” it has been said too truly, “of both sexes, are not now such “good servants, they are not so obedient, are more “impatient of restraint, and less amenable to discipline

¹ The business of the new Divorce Court is absolutely overwhelming, and the details of it disgusting beyond expression.

“and order, less frequent in their attendance at church, less careful, and less inclined to continue in one situation; more fond of dress and show, and much more lax in their general moral conduct, than they were 25 or 30 years ago.” Again, “the enormous increase of loose morals in all our towns and large villages is notorious; and almost as bad a feature as any is the indifference, and frequently entire disregard, manifested by boys and girls at a very early age, for the authority of their parents, who tacitly allow what they seem unable to prevent.”¹ This is extensively true, and the cause of it is fairly attributed in a great measure to the “entire *absence of home education*, of that teaching and that training which none but a mother can give.” But there are many persons who nevertheless cannot help inclining to the suspicion, that the spread of public education among the people is answerable for all their sins. “Many farmers and masters find that the children of laborers do not come to them so well trained for common handy work, nor with such willing obedience as they used to do, and hence they observe *in reference to schools,—Cui bono?*”

This question I will endeavour to answer, chiefly with the view at least of exculpating the promoters of education from certain implications, and to lay open as far as I can the real truth. And, first, are the vices and follies of the age peculiar to the classes from which our servants come? Assuredly not. Very much that is said of their dislike of restraint, disobedience, love of dress, unfitness for the duties of their station, &c., is equally true of many in the classes above them.

¹ Letter of H. E. Blyth, Esq., to the Archdeacon of Norfolk, 1857. It would be good service if more of our influential lay brethren would interest themselves in the moral welfare of the people, in the way that is done by my brother in this valuable letter. We may not agree in all our ideas and conclusions, but it is the discussion of them which brings out the truth and fixes attention upon it.

Consider the effect of this example! Then, many young masters, but especially young mistresses, do not know how to treat servants, much less how to train them and to keep them. The girls of the Docking Union school are taken "for half their time, *out of the school into the kitchen.*" This is a very sensible and practical thing to do. Their future mistresses, the daughters of farmers, or clergymen, or other gentlemen, ought to be taken there likewise more often than they are, that they may be better acquainted with the nature of servants' work and wants and duties, and learn wisdom for the management of their households. Again, in some domestic establishments there is positively *no day of rest*, but much of common labour, and even more preparation for visitors, &c., on Sabbath days, than on any other day of the week. I have known respectable servants from this village get into such places, and have not been allowed to go to church more than about once a month. Is it reasonable to expect that servants will stay long in such places? Still worse, as to *loose morals*, there are masters and mistresses who "care for none of these things," but will actually continue in their service girls of loose character. With regard, moreover, to boys being less apt for handy work than their fathers were on entering upon field labour, (which by the way girls also are now required to do in mixed gangs, than which no system was ever invented more corruptive of good morals), I confess I cannot see how this can be fairly connected with the duties of a village school, unless it professes to give industrial training, which I suppose not one in fifty does. But more than all, there is the monster plague of insufficient cottage accommodation, where, in so many hundreds of instances, a whole family of all ages and both sexes is compelled to sleep and dress in one little room, where two would not be decently sufficient. So long as this prolific source of

vice exists, it will be useless to expect much improvement in the personal morality of the rising generation.

These, I think, are some of the causes of those defects in the youthful character complained of, and they are further rapidly developed and greatly increased by the peculiar temptations of our times, affecting all classes alike, namely, the immensely increased facilities of communication,—which are used for evil as well as for good,—cheap postage, cheap travelling, cheap articles of dress and tawdry ornament, and a thousand emissaries of the Evil One running swiftly to and fro through the land.

Against all these we have to contend, in our efforts to train and teach our children; and we are not unblessed in our work, for where it can be shewn that education is abused by some to bad purposes, (and the abuse is no argument against the introduction of a good thing), it could also be shewn, in more striking proportions, that it has been the greatest blessing to far greater numbers. This I have not time or space to trace out. It is the same in kind, if not in degree, as that which a good education has brought to any of ourselves. One question only I would ask here :—Whence comes that universally admired patience of the men of Lancashire at the present time? Twenty-five or thirty years ago there would have been alarming bread riots, to be quelled only by the brute force of Cavalry and batteries of Artillery, at the sacrifice of life, and vast cost to the country. Let us thank God and go forward, rejoicing that the deserted mill-room is for the time turned into a school-room. The work is really a national work, and will be a vast national benefit if properly directed. Hitherto the clergy, in many places where schools have been established, have had to bear too large a proportion of the burden of the expense.¹

¹ Her Majesty's Commissioners on Education, in their recent Report, remark that the clergyman "is frequently responsible for the finances of

Numbers of the wealthier laity as yet withhold their support, and many others, it is sometimes said, "only" "give it out of respect to their minister or other friends," "rather than from any conviction of the positive good" "effected by the school." Well, at any rate they are cheerful givers, and "God loveth a cheerful giver." They "plow in hope," and in their "threshing" they shall be "partakers of their hope." The fruits indeed at first may be in great measure invisible, because the real value of a good institution lies as much in the unknown amount of ills and evils prevented, as in evident benefits obtained.

But if it be allowable thus to hint at the motives of some who lend a hesitating aid to the cause of the education of the poor, it is allowable to do the same with those who withhold it altogether. They allege indeed the faults and follies of the age as great discouragements to charity; but when they charge them upon the general extension of education, do they take pains to ascertain whether their impressions are well founded? do they desire information? do they read reports? do they consider facts? and search and "see" "whether these things are so"? I fear very many do not. One single visit to a school would go far to modify a hostile or indifferent feeling towards it. Let us all beware of this great tempting fallacy and self-deception—the plea of *disapproving* an object whose merits we have not inquired into, or of *inability* (cannot afford) to "spend or be spent" in a good Christian cause, when at the same time we are either indulging largely in personal luxuries, or, on the other hand, straining every nerve to save money. "There is that" "*scattereth and yet increaseth*"; there is that with-
"holdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to *poverty*,"

"the school; he takes the largest interest in its affairs; he has to beg" "subscriptions from all sources; and at last submits, most meritoriously," "to bear not only his own proportion of the expense, but also that which" "ought to be borne by others."

—if not a poverty in worldly goods, yet the poverty of a barren faith, and a leanness of soul, which will have no reward in the day of account.

3. As regards the greatest of all the Institutions of our parochial system, the Church of England established all through the land, I would beg to make one or two remarks, suggested by our local circumstances. Theoretically it is assumed that provision is made for a Christian minister in every parish. But what is really the case? There are eleven parishes in the Deanery of Fincham whose clergy derive from various sources an official aggregate income of under £900 per annum, *i.e.*, an average of £80 for each parish, which, (not one of them having a parsonage house), after rent, rates and taxes have been paid, is really only £50 as *the provision*. I hope there is no parallel to this in any other Deanery in England. In other professions the stipends granted by the State to men of no higher attainments, for services not more important, and responsibilities of far less weight, are not often below £500 per annum. To refer only to the lower civil and moral considerations connected with the clerical office, how does the State requite her ministers for services rendered? We take an example. For every registration of a marriage, being now so far a civil service, there is a double entry required of numerous minute particulars, in which the highest interests of the whole parish are cared for. This has to be written out a third time for the Superintendent Registrar, and the accumulating fee for the whole amounts to *six-pence*, which in a population of 1000 persons will add *five-shillings* per annum to the income of the clergyman. Were it not for private resources which he brings to his aid in his

official duties, the beautiful theory of the parochial system would in hundreds of places entirely fall to pieces. Let the jeering sentiment of the puritanical or political religionist, that the curate of souls ought not to trouble himself with thoughts about maintenance, feel itself crushed by the just precept of both Testaments, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn."

There is also the old argument about tithes, which some, not many, still put forth in hostile discussion upon the Church's temporal rights. They say that tithes were always meant to bear a large proportion of the burdens which the claims of charity involve. But they forget that since the time when Henry VIII, "in a storm of indignation against the clergy of that day, mingled with insatiable avarice," despoiled whole thousands of churches of their tithes, they have become a recognised legal and saleable hereditament, as much so as land itself. They forget moreover that tithe no longer means a *tenth*, nor represents indeed a twentieth part, of the land's produce. It was so perhaps when Nigellus de Fyncham gave his tithe (*decimam suam partem*) to the monks of Castle-Acre; but I suspect that their successors, the vicars of Castle-Acre, have had a very different tale to tell. Then how as to impropriations and appropriations? The subject is intricate and cannot be discussed here. Whatever may be the equitable and proportionate liability of any property or possessions whatsoever to voluntary assessments, (if I may so speak), in the cause of charity, it appears to be the proper part of the Church to work on in faith and hope, that men, "seeing her good works," may be stimulated thereby to step forward in the day of her necessity and appeal. The recent and progressive restoration of churches and chancels, with other generous and more private acts of Christian benevolence, are evidences of an awakened readiness to

help, on the part of *impropriators* of tithe. This is not, however, so clearly seen in the application of *appropriations*, which are in the hands of civil and ecclesiastical corporations; and the reason is, I suppose, because, as it is said, *they* have no conscience.

King James I. addressed the following letter to the University of Oxford on this nationally important subject :—

JAMES REX.

Right trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well :—the zeal that Religion might be well planted in this realm, and all other our dominions, hath caused us to enter into consideration of the means that might best serve to the furtherance thereof. Wherein finding that no one thing is a greater impediment, than want of competent living to maintain learned men in such places, we have found that there could not be a readier way to supply that defect, than if the appropriate tithes might be converted again to the right use for which they were instituted, and wherein we have a purpose to do by God's grace, in such of them as are or shall be in our hands. By which example of ours we presume to induce all others, possessed of the like, to imitate us as far as with their ability they may.

In the mean time, to give beginning to so good a work, none are more fit than the Colleges in the Universities, whose example should have great efficacy unto all good men, in this sort, to advance the glory of Christ's Gospel.¹

Given, &c. :—at Windsor.

10th July, 1603.

Then, in looking to the efficiency of the Church, there are a great many persons who consider her constitution to be capable of considerable further development, and adaptation to the circumstances and wants of the times. And surely it is true loyalty and nothing otherwise in churchmen to inquire " what can be done " to supply the needs, to remove the defects, to increase " the usefulness, to promote the welfare, of the body

¹ *History of Sacrilege*, p. 240.

“ with which they are themselves incorporated,— in
 “ whose trusts and privileges they participate,—whose
 “ interests they are bound to foster and to further.
 “ The English Church has had her warnings both
 “ from without and from within, and had it not been
 “ a true branch of Christ’s Church, planted on the
 “ Rock of Ages, it must have come to an end long
 “ ago.” In what I am about to say, I know that the
 majority of my brethren in the ministry do not agree
 with me. I therefore speak with deference to their
 opinions. The laity, however, in larger numbers may
 approve of this definite principle, that it is wise and
 right that Ecclesiastical Laws, and Church Institutions,
 and the Order of Divine Service, should be not only
 such as are agreeable with Scripture, but also adapted
 to the exigencies of the times. In confirmation of
 which principle I will make just one quotation from
 the Preface to the Book of Common Prayer: “ It is
 “ but reasonable that, upon weighty and important
 “ considerations, according to the various exigency of
 “ times and occasions, such changes and alterations
 “ should be made therein, as to those that are in places
 “ of authority should from time to time seem either
 “ necessary or expedient.” Nobody can justly allege
 against the wisdom of this sentiment that experience
 does not confirm it, for experience has been denied its
 opportunity. There has been only one revision of the
 Prayer Book since 1559, and that, unhappily, of a
 retrograde character, in 1662, now exactly two cen-
 turies ago.

Then, also, “ there is an increasing conviction,” says
 Archdeacon Sandford, “ that the Church needs the aid
 “ of its lay members, in some more definite position,
 “ and practical share in the administration of its affairs,
 “ than they have been hitherto called to. Other religious
 “ bodies have known how to avail themselves of lay
 “ co-operation ; and amongst them the laity exercise

“ an important voice and agency.” Nor is there involved any necessary change in the constitution of our Established Church in such an idea. The office of Churchwarden, than which there is no more honorable office in either Church or State, has its distinctive duties of a certain formal routine character. And these need not be interfered with. “ But there are
 “ numerous points on which the judgment and feelings
 “ of the lay members of the Church ought to be con-
 “ sulted, on which they are at present debarred from
 “ any legitimate means of expressing these. From
 “ how much that has not only disturbed the peace of
 “ parishes, but agitated the public mind, and prejudiced
 “ the cause of the Church, would it have been preserved,
 “ had our pious and leading laymen possessed some
 “ legitimate method of remonstrance ! The fusion of
 “ the laity with the clergy, in Diocesan and Archi-
 “ diaconal and Ruri-decanal Conferences, has been
 “ tried with the happiest effects in our Colonial Church,
 “ and in some of our Dioceses at home ; and no one
 “ can deny the great and manifold blessings which
 “ might result to the English Church, were the sym-
 “ pathies, counsels, and personal efforts of the laity
 “ more enlisted and exercised in its behalf.”¹ The subject, it is known, has received much attention from those in authority, and has been discussed in Convocation, with a very favorable prospect of a further consideration.

In the meanwhile, we may all, but the clergy especially, ponder the wisdom which is contained in one more quotation from the very able and practical work to which attention has been called. The author, speaking of the qualities which the English people prize in their spiritual guides, continues : “ It behoves
 “ all who love their Church, and seek its peace and

¹ See the Bampton Lectures at Oxford, for 1861, p. 207, by John Sandford, B.D., Archdeacon of Coventry, from which I have taken this, and one or two other sentences, in this section.

“ its extension—and would have it rooted and estab-
 “ lished in the hearts of our people—in their teaching,
 “ in their mode of celebrating worship, in the arrange-
 “ ment of their churches, in their personal conduct and
 “ demeanour,—even in their dress,—to ‘ give no offence
 “ ‘ in anything, that the ministry be not blamed.’ And
 “ all who understand the temper of our countrymen
 “ must pray that the Church’s doctrine, and its discip-
 “ line, and its ritual, may be such as to secure respect
 “ and inspire confidence,—and that the desire and aim
 “ of all its members may ever be to heal sores and
 “ compose differences, and promote peace, and unity,
 “ and goodwill, and practical godliness, in every parish,
 “ and in every dwelling.”

4. There is another most important object to which
 our thoughts may with advantage be directed, namely,
 the material Fabric of the Parish Church, and its proper
 reparation. In the first place, that every parish in
 England should have a Church, dedicated to the honor
 and glory of Almighty God, is perhaps the most beau-
 tiful external feature in the constitution of our Christian
 country. It stands there a witness for God and the
 Christian religion, abiding from generation to genera-
 tion. And even in the supposition and admission of a
 spiritually collapsed state of things, in how many in-
 stances it has been the means of retaining some fear of
 God in that place—in how many, even though dilapi-
 dated, it has given the signal note of a revival of
 religious life,—“ the stone crying out of the wall, and
 “ the beam out of the timber answering it,”—as some
 reflecting man has seen its desolation, and been moved
 to prayer and exertion,—is not within the power of any
 to say. The outward and sensible object has attracted

attention, when but for it every soul might have slept on still in his lethargic state. It was such a sight as this which moved Nehemiah to very earnest supplication to God, and exhortation to the people, for the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem ; and he had not far to seek for the true answer to the scornful reproaches of the obstructive Sanballats and Tobiahs who surrounded him,—“The God of heaven, he will prosper us ; therefore we his servants will arise and build.” —Neh. ii. 20.

In the restoration of the Church the fire of true zeal and devotion is kindled afresh, and hundreds have been reached and touched by its invigorating warmth. It is perhaps the greatest external aid that can be rendered to the cause of religion and truth and righteousness. The minister finds herein a hearty stimulus to higher labours, and the more than half-dead piety of the people is proportionately aroused. When Bishop Stanley first saw the plans for a National School and the restoration of St. Martin's Church in this place, he exclaimed : “I am amply repaid by these for all my anxieties about your parish.”

This awakened respect for the sanctuary of God has recalled to many how “God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of his saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are round about Him.” And it has taught no other lesson more forcibly than this,—that “God is no respecter of persons,” that the soul of Lazarus is as precious in his sight as the soul of Dives. There is even a diffused benefit from this source perceptible amongst the clergy themselves. It has promoted a tendency to a closer uniformity, and greater harmony amongst them ; it has shamed many out of slovenly services ; and has led others to see more clearly that the saving truths of the Bible are incorporated in our admirable Prayer Book. And hence the people have been “edified,” “*built up*, an holy temple unto the Lord.”

We have been more than once rejoiced to hear from our highly-esteemed Archdeacon of the steady progress of church restoration in his Archdeaconry. I think he will not hesitate to award to us our due share of the credit to be taken for a fair contribution to the general result.¹

I used just now the word "edified." I would take it as a text for one or two further remarks. Edification, as we know, means "a building up," in a moral or religious or spiritual sense, stone upon stone, on a good foundation, "even Christ, from whom the whole "body, fitly joined together, and compacted by that "which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual "working in the measure of every part, maketh increase "of the body unto the *edifying* of itself in love." Now the etymology of the word, combined with the beautiful expansion and exposition of its meaning in this verse, shews clearly that substantial unity is a very essential requirement in Christ's Church, for its strength and perfection; and that the most perfect unity is that which embraces the body as well as the spirit. The idea is expressed twice in this verse, "the whole body "fitly framed together," and again "maketh increase "of the body." Now what is the body of the Church,

¹ Restorations of churches in this Deanery, more or less satisfactory and complete, effected within the last twenty years or thereabouts, and all of them supplying to a great extent an acknowledged defect in their former state, namely, a more just and impartial seating of the congregation, may be seen in the following churches:—Upwell, West Dereham, South Rington (new), Holme, Fincham, Stoke Ferry (new chancel), Barton St. Andrew, Welney (new), Hilgay St. Mark's (new), Downham, Stow, Wimbotsham, Shouldham Thorpe, Bexwell, Southery (new), Outwell, Ryston, Wretton, and Hilgay All Saints, which last is now in progress, and will be almost an entirely new building, in excellent taste.—Of the rest of our churches about nine require immediate attention as being dilapidated, or bad in their internal arrangements; and the remaining five may be said to afford sufficient and fair accommodation, but are capable of and demand considerable improvements. There are still some things the toleration of which is almost now doomed,—that they will soon be of the past can hardly be questioned,—and with another generation will be a matter of amazement.

if it be not "the body of Christian believers"? And how can that be truly a body whose parts are not compacted together? and have no joints? nor any effectual working together in the measure of every part? That can only be properly called a body where the several members are united, and meet together, and "sit together," and communicate one with another.

I am not now speaking of dissenters, or of other churches, but rather of the inconsistency of members of our own church. For they who have been baptized into her communion, and taught in her schools, and confirmed in her fellowship, and hope to be buried with her services, are rightly called members; and that they should not all worship together, and communicate together, but join themselves to other congregations for these ends, is surely in forgetfulness of the Apostle's precept and God's word, which says that divisions are a sign of a carnal mind, and that "God hath tempered the body together," in order "that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another." —1 Cor. xii. 25.

The restoration of the visible Fabric has contributed not a little towards preventing this schism, and towards effecting the "compactness" of a spiritual edification, the unity and growth in grace of the body of the Church of Christ. It has done much for the consolidation of the earlier labours of devoted men. "When Wesley sounded the note which woke the English Church from its death sleep; when Whitfield reasoned of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come; when the fathers of the great modern religious movement stirred everywhere the national mind in the beginning of the present century,—these men took comparatively little thought of the Church's material structures and outward forms. For they were the pioneers of a religious revival,—and had to

“resuscitate dry bones, and to breathe life into an effete and almost extinct theology, and to impart elementary lessons in religion.

“But the effect of their preaching was as might have been anticipated. Both Church and Nation awoke to a sense of their responsibilities, and more sacred buildings have been erected in this country in the course of a few years than during any previous whole century.”¹

And thus, where this and the other accessories of divine worship have been provided, and the means of grace under a faithful ministry completed, it seems that all is being done that can be done, and the responsibility of divisions and separations must remain with the separatist himself, which before could scarcely in all cases be justly said. John Wesley would now be, more than ever he was, a Churchman, and all who are called by his name would do well to consider his real sentiments on this point. To help them in this I will very briefly quote from his writings:—“The Methodists of Oxford [the beginning of Methodism] were all one body, and as it were one soul, members of the Established Church”;—“and it was determined without one dissentient voice that they ought not to separate from it.”—“I believe one reason why God is pleased to continue my life so long [1786] is to confirm them in their purpose, not to separate from the Church.”—“As for myself I dare not renounce communion with the Church of England. As a minister I teach her doctrines, I use her offices, I conform to her rubrics. As a private member I join in her prayers, in hearing, in communicating.”—“I declare once more that I live and die a member of the Church of England, and that none who regard my judgment and advice will ever separate from it.”²

¹ Bampton Lectures, 1861, p. 174.

² Wesley's Works, vols. vii, viii, xii, xiii, &c. He died in 1791.

And now where the Fabric of the Church has been restored to its proper character and use, as the House of God, and place of Common Prayer, will any man grudge a small annual outlay for its sustentation? Will any man labour to deprive her of any right which has been hers for centuries? And why, as guardians of her temporal interests, should her officers and faithful sons give up those rights without sufficient compensation? Will the private owner do it? Does the Legislature ever take away an inch of land, or other private privilege and right, without a full and fair and legal compensation? No. Then let the English Church have justice likewise. Give up the offensive *rate*, (it has become a hateful word), but make a rent charge on the land,—a charge to which that land has been legally liable for so many ages, and has hitherto honorably borne,—and the whole question, as it seems to me, is settled for ever.

5. Lastly, there is the village Church-yard. What awakening thoughts does it suggest! Every right feeling dictates reverence for such a spot. It is consecrated by whatever is dear to affection or sacred in religion,—by our griefs and our consolations as mourners,—by the memory of those we have lost, and the hope of reunion;—above all by thoughts of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life. Mere natural feeling would sanctify the spot where friends and relations sleep in the dust; but doubly so the religion which has brought life and immortality to light,—and which fortifies us to resign the form, dear even in decay, by the hope that it will rise again. How ought, then, “God’s acre” to exhibit every where the appearance of pious care, and its general air and aspect to imply that it is sacred to the departed, and may in a

proper sense be termed "holy ground." The reverse of this is too frequently the case, where its real condition revolts the feeling mind, and painfully contrasts with what piety would claim for such an inclosure. There cannot be any surer means of weakening the sanctions of religion itself, than by any habitual desecration, (for instance, by the trampling of cattle upon the graves), of what every reverential feeling would lead us to respect. The clergy are chiefly responsible for this, the freehold being generally in them, and coming so immediately under their observation.¹

It unfortunately happens at the present moment that the parish Church-yard is an object of anxiety and solicitude with those in whose care and under whose control it has ever been placed by law. Access to it is demanded by certain non-conformist bodies for their own free and unrestricted use. The opposition to this on the part of the Church must not be set down to petty feelings of jealousy. There is a most important principle involved in it, and upon that principle and the sacred dictates of conscience our objections are based.

It must be borne in mind that the burial of the dead in the parish Church-yard is an integral part of our national parochial system. The Church and its surrounding cemetery are bound together by the most intimate and indissoluble ties. The burial service itself most aptly shews this connection, for it is used partly in both of them. In giving up the one you must be expected to give up the other. But, further, a little reflection will convince us how that to throw

¹ See Sandford's *Parochialia*, p. 58. Since the chapter was written in which the church-yard of this parish is noticed, a piece of land has been liberally given for its enlargement by Mr. Hebgin, the impropiator. It will be well for certain other parishes in this Deanery to lose no time in making efforts for the like object, as their church-yards are now liable to be closed at any time by an order from the Home Office, under the new Burial Acts; and they will then probably be required to provide a new cemetery with *two chapels* at the parish expense.

open the Church-yard to all sects and denominations would be to introduce and sanction in turn every kind of doctrine and sentiment and superstition, indeed even the most contemptuous infidelity, under the very walls, and ultimately within that very building, where the clergy are solemnly bound to preach and uphold the pure truth of Christ's holy gospel. If you admit one you must admit all, and no more fruitful source of religious strife and "bitter envyings" could possibly be opened up.

If any decline our funeral service for the dead,—against which the only fault I have ever heard imputed is that it is too charitable, or rather too comprehensive,—their proper course is obviously to provide their own place of sepulture, and use their own services, as they do in regard to congregational worship.

But if this should be felt to be too inconvenient, or undesirable, as promoting and further ratifying discord even in death, (and few things are more hideous in the landscape of the country than the twin-chapel cemeteries which are rearing their rival fronts around us), then there remains this one other medium alternative, that the representatives of the deceased should first celebrate their funeral service at their own chapel, or private house, and then, if they desire it, quietly deposit the corpse, without any further religious ceremony, in the burial ground of the Church. A legal enactment for this might possibly be obtained, as indeed is in contemplation. It certainly will not be so unanimously opposed as that which has been recently demanded. Such a concession would have the conciliatory effect at least of continuing unbroken that strong chain of attachment to ancient landmarks, and so far to the Church of England, which is supplied by deceased relatives continuing to be laid side by side in their last earthly resting place, as one after another they shall be thus literally "gathered to their fathers."

Let these reflections have their due effect upon the living. They are intended to point to scenes which survivors may visit with a melancholy pleasure, and there muse hopefully upon their own mortality.

" 'Tis well true hearts should for a time retire
 " To holy ground, in quiet to aspire
 " Towards promised regions of serener grace :—
 " *Then to the world return, nor fear to cast*
 " *Thy bread upon the waters.*"—*The Christian Year.*

Let us not dream away life! Let us never again talk of killing time, forgetting how we are being killed by it! It is an unavailing regret, when men say they would give the world to live over again. "Oh! for ten years only back again, with the added experience of age!" Work now, young men, and face the drudgery and overcome the temptations of daily life. Recoil not from duty, nor waste your golden opportunities. Enquire, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And see "how England might be Christianised, and the world evangelised, and humanity redeemed, and God glorified, and earth and heaven break forth into jubilate,—if each one amongst us would put forth his own strength, and do his own work." Then all is bright beyond. *Faith* realized—*hope* fulfilled—and *charity*, which never faileth, perfected in its eternal enjoyment. For this, unerring TRUTH is pledged :—

" From low to high doth dissolution climb,
 " And sink from high to low, along a scale
 " Of awful notes, whose concord shall not fail ;
 " A musical but melancholy chime,
 " Which they can hear who meddle not with crime,
 " Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.
 " TRUTH FAILS NOT ;—but her outward forms, that bear
 " The longest date, do melt like frosty rime,
 " That in the morning whitened hill and plain,
 " AND IS NO MORE."—*Wordsworth.*

FINIS.

APPENDIX A.

DEED sans date (early in Henry III, and referred to in chap. xiv., page 107,) whereby Richard "son of "Robert" de Fincham conveys to William de Edisfeld one rood of land, lying in the "South Field" of Fincham, on payment of one half-penny annually at the feast of All Saints :—

Sciant præsentēs et futuri quod ego Ricardus filius Roberti de Fincham concessi et dedi et hac præsentī carta mea confirmavi Willielmo de Edisfeld unam rodā terre mee jacentem in campis de Fincham, scilicet in Suth-feld, inter terram Willielmi Mudisit et terram Herlewini filii Roberti, illi et heredibus suis tenendam de me et heredibus meis libere et quiete, per servitium unius oboli reddendi annuatim mihi et heredibus meis in festo omnium sanctorum pro omni servicio et consuetudine et demandā. Et ego prenomīnatus Ricardus filius Roberti et heredes mei warrantizabimus predicto Willielmo de Edisfeld et heredibus suis prenomīnatam rodā terre in perpetuum contra omnes homines. Pro hac concessione et donatione et carte mee confirmatione predictus Willielmus de Edisfeld fecit mihi Homagium.

Domino Waltero de Littlewello, Domino Osberto de Stradesete, Rogero filio Stephani, Roberto de Brothers-halle, John Chapman, Roberto filio Thurstoni, Willielmo Godsib, et multis aliis.—*At Stow. Seal lost.*

APPENDIX B.

DEED sans date (referred to in the note to page 108, chap. xiv.), whereby Richard "son of John" de Fincham grants to John de Fincham the chaplain, for fifteen shillings of silver, and one penny annually at the feast of All Saints, half an acre of land in "langowe," (or lang-holme), field," in Fincham :—

Sciant presentes et futuri, quod ego Ricardus filius Johannis de Fincham concessi dedi et hac mea carta confirmavi Johanni de Fincham Capellano et heredibus suis et suis assignatis, pro servicio suo et pro quindecim solidos argenti quos mihi dedit præ manibus, unam dimidiam acrem terre, in campo de Fincham jacentem scilicet super langowe feld, inter terram Rogeri de Pidetone et terram que fuit Willielmi de Wigenhale, et abuttabat super altam viam versus austrum, habendam et tenendam de me et heredibus meis dicto Johanni et heredibus suis seu suis assignatis, vel cuicumque dare vendere legare vel assignare voluerit, libere quiete bene in pace in feodo et hereditate; reddendo inde annuatim mihi et heredibus meis unum denarium ad festum omnium sanctorum, pro omnibus serviciis consuetudinibus exactionibus sectis curiarum et omnimodis demandis. Et ego dictus Ricardus et heredes mei dictam terram, si habeatur ibi plus sive minus, warrantizabimus acquietabimus et defendemus dicto Johanni et heredibus suis vel suis assignatis, per dictum servicium, contra omnes gentes Christianos et Judæos in perpetuum; in cujus rei testimonium huic scripto sigillum meum apposui.

Testibus Johanne Curpel, Johanne Thalbot, Philippo fratre suo, Andrea de Fincham, Johanne Godscib, Hugone filio Johannis, Hugone Thalbot, Tristram de Tychewelle, Roberto de Fynchele, Rogero filio Walteri, Willielmo Hode, Ricardo Hode, Bartholomeo de Suldham, et aliis.

Seal: A star, surrounded by this legend, "S' RIC' F' IOH'IS."—*At Stow.*

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS.

Page 8, line 3. It ought to have been more distinctly stated that Sir Thomas is Lord of the *original Hundred* of Clackclose; the superincumbent *Half Hundred* having been separated from it on the breaking up of Ramsey Abbey, and passed by purchase to the Beauprés of Beaupré.

Page 9. Note. For a fuller explanation of "Carucate," see a note by Mr. Munford on this word in *Memorials of West Winch*, p. 46.

Page 58, line 3. The Will of Nicholas Fyncham, clerk, having been nearly all quoted, it was not thought necessary to reprint it with the other Wills.

Page 108, line 10. The reference to the Plate of Seals, No. 3, belongs properly to the seal mentioned in the note at the foot of this page. But it will be seen how very little the two seals differ from each other.

Page 118, line 2. For Serjeant at Arms, *read* Serjeant at Law.

Page 134, line 10. The late Mr. Alfred Fincham will not be buried at Fincham as intended, but in the Brompton Cemetery, London.

Page 148, line 25. *Archd. Norf.* relates to the place or Court in which this Will was proved. It is preserved at *Stow*.

Page 164, line 7. With regard to the botanical products of this parish, though truly as I have said before there is but little here to interest an ardent lover of the pursuit, I might have mentioned a natural phenomenon which has fallen under my own observation. I remember the late popular and esteemed Professor Henslow, in one of his lectures about 30 years ago, introducing a basket of Primroses to his student hearers, each of us to take one specimen, whilst he retained in his own hand a Primrose, (*Primula vulgaris*), an Oxlip, (*Pr. elatior*), and a Cowslip, (*Pr. veris*). These three he said he had himself raised from one and the same seed, proving that they were only varieties of the same plant, the true nature and history of which is said by Sir James Edward Smith in his *English Flora* to be very obscure. In a certain corner of Barton-Leys Wood, the property of Sir Hanson Berney, Bart., but in this parish, I have found good confirmation of

the Professor's remarks. I have taken specimens of the Oxlip and Primrose growing *from the same bulb*, with the Cowslip intermixed, and they present together in this family group an exceedingly pretty effect.

I may add that what I think to be the rarest and prettiest plant in the parish is the *Neottia spiralis*, Sweet Ladies' Traces, which scantily adorns with its slender "spiral spike," "of many, crowded, small, white, highly-fragrant flowers," one or two of our meadows. A friend advises me not to give too clearly defined habitats, for the greediness of botanists is notoriously insatiable!

Page 174, line 33. With regard to labourers' Cottages, the worst case and the most perfect cure that I have heard of is on the estate of Lord Sherborne, in Hampshire. The Hon. R. H. Dutton, M.P., in recently noticing the improvements made by his father, stated publicly that all the cottages had lately been rebuilt, with three bed-rooms to each, where before there were only two of them on the whole estate that had more than one bed-room. They are now let at one shilling per week each, and though the owner gets no direct return from them, the farms obtain a higher rent when re-let. He also expressed an opinion that this kind of property might be made much more valuable, if placed in suitable positions about the estate, in double dwellings, with gardens well stocked with fruit trees.



